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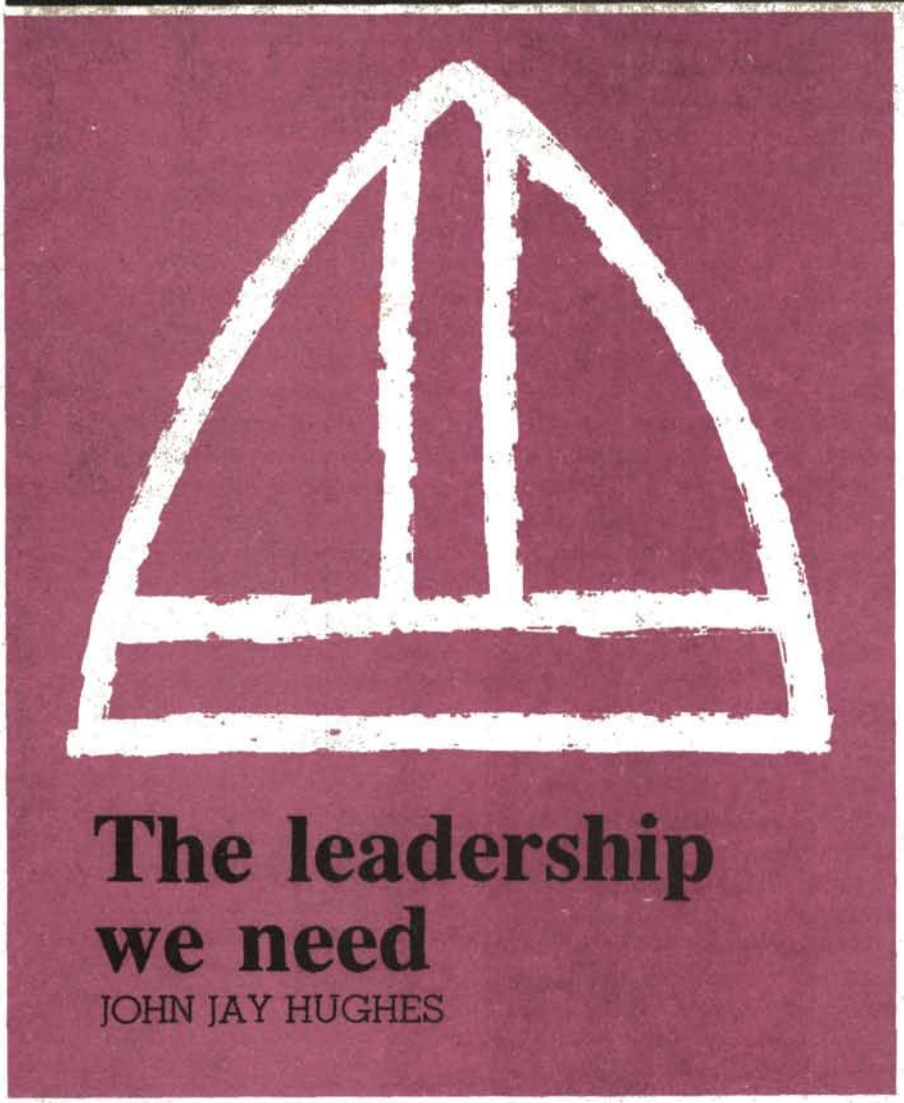

The leadership we need

JOHN JAY HUGHES

Desmond Fisher
'TIP' ON IRELAND

Rodger Van Allen
U.S. CATHOLICISM

Frank Getlein
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SEX, SIN & GOD

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Lebanon: from nation to factions

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Correspondence

Weber & agency rules

Chicago, Ill.

To the Editors: Professor Isidore Silver's evaluation of *Weber vs. Kaiser* [Mar. 30] is an excellent rationale for redressing societal discrimination against blacks, but that is not wholely the issue in this litigation. The agreement was the result of federal administrative action and the assumptions for their actions is the difficulty. Justice Marshall in *Bakke* forcefully and eloquently states the case for redress of societal discrimination experienced by blacks. Agency rules imposing quotas in *Weber* do not redress the grievances he documents. The quota is minority, not black, and the term as used by federal agents includes female.

In addition, the United States Department of Labor, on May 12, 1978, issued rules, "Equal Employment Opportunity in Apprenticeship & Training" (Federal Register 43 FR 20760) requiring apprenticeship programs nationwide to enroll female applicants at a rate of 50 percent of the local female workforce. The *Weber* agreement is already modified or not applicable, without a decision by the Supreme Court.

Occupational disparity is not employment discrimination, and a quota redress, based on a statistical deviation from a white male standard that includes black, Indian, Hispanic and female, does not address society's obligation to rectify the tragic experiences of black citizens. Discrimination in cause and effect on society is not the same for blacks, Hispanics, Asiatics or female. Equating "something for everyone" quotas as affirmative action is untested federal agency opinion, not civil rights law.

Affirmative action is a function of industrial relations not law. It takes many forms and to have meaning and be effective requires programs to be tied to a multitude of industrial relations techniques and procedures. To infer the denial of an agency opinion, as a dire threat to affirmative action is questionable.

If your readers would consider the possibility that agency rule assumptions are the real issue, the perspective changes. Agency rules interpreting new law are being tested. The bureaucracy's vested interests are more at stake than citizen's redress under the law.

I would like to suggest to Professor Silver and others that *Defunis, Bakke, Weber et al,* are less threatening to affirmative action than the reorganization of federal equal employment opportunity efforts to be completed by 1981. The reorganization is the centralizing of failed effort and can only result in administrative failure.

Policy and administration are no longer a staffed operational responsibility in federal agencies. Responsibility is being isolated into one agency with five people arbitrating the competing interests of over 100 million workers. It is structurally impossible to administrate. Fragmentation of effort has not produced the failures. Program interpretations still to be tested are the problem. Failure to see this should be of concern to anyone claiming leadership or commitment to social justice.

RAYMOND M. SCANNELL

Weber & legislatures

Pinole, Calif.

To the Editors: I would like to thank you for publishing the incisive piece on affirmative action by Professor Isidore Silver [Mar. 30]. As a fellow professor of Constitutional Law, I can appreciate fully the inherent ambiguity of the issue. It seems to be a form of Greek tragedy because whatever way you go, there is both good and evil. *Bakke* and *Weber* make very bad moral exemplars and because of this, poor legal precedents.

May I add only one more dimension to this agonizing problem. Professor Silver—and other constitutional scholars—all seem to think that this problem is justiciable, that is, that it can be appropriately managed and handled by a court of law. I submit that it cannot precisely because of the many factors which go into these cases.

When you deal with a *Weber* on an individual basis, the case seems manageable in terms of judicial standards (e.g. merit, Title VII, past discrimination, etc.) But when you examine the case more profoundly, you encounter a whole complex of societal problems which make these cases more and more unmanageable. You must include therein the history of discrimination in the country, its lasting effects for blacks in every sector of their (our) lives in a thousand different but mostly unmeasurable ways. Courts of law are simply not equipped to face, resolve, or give any manageable remedy to so amorphous a complex. The problem has now become so entwined in everyday reality that the innocent are truly caught up in the fruits of the original sin of slavery.

That is why this question of affirmative action—absent any clear showing of particularized past discrimination—must be resolved politically. Only the political-legislative process can hope to grapple with the broad, societal effects of racism in our society with a minimum amount of rancor and bitterness from affected whites. Somehow, people will more readily accept a democratic solution(s) in this area, but would be extremely reluctant to do so from a non-elected, imperious judiciary making moral decisions for us all.

The objection to this political process is too evident: progress will never come about. As a factual basis, this simply has not been true in the past (e.g. Titles VI and VII themselves). More importantly, it is the only way justly to deal with this all-pervasive problem, and to avoid a further racial split. Courts of law in this area have gone about as far as they can go since already we see counter-

(Continued on page 350)

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NEW FRONTIERS FOR LABOR

GEORGE MEANY, AFL-CIO president, was hospitalized recently for treatment of bursitis and for the first time in 20 years missed a meeting of the federation's executive council. Absence of the 84-year-old labor leader will undoubtedly give new life to rumors that he may retire this year instead of seeking reelection at the AFL-CIO's biennial convention this fall. For our part, we would not bet too much on any move toward retirement by Mr. Meany. He did not get where he is by giving up easily, and he is stubborn enough not to want to give either Jimmy Carter or his opponents in the ranks of the AFL-CIO the satisfaction of seeing him step down. Critics who say the labor movement is in the doldrums have a point, however, although it is not necessarily fair to blame this state of affairs on George Meany; whether or not he steps down from his job, labor's top leaders should be thinking of ways and means of breathing new life into the American labor movement. With far less people working, union labor at one time made up 30 percent of the wage force in this country; today it is down to just over 20 percent. Not many years ago, labor exercised real power inside the Democratic party; that power is not gone, but it is today seriously weakened. Nor has labor been rewarded for its recent efforts. Despite its crucial role in Democratic victories in the last two elections, labor was unable to push through legislation it considered vital to its interests. Talk of labor-management cooperation is fading away, big business is taking a more aggressive anti-union stance, and plants all over the industrial Northeast are fleeing to the unorganized South.

In the South the notorious example of the J.P. Stevens Company has been much discussed. Less well known but a good example of one of organized labor's major problems is the Michelin tire plant in Greenville, S.C. With the United Rubber Workers confronting Uniroyal and the other unionized tire companies, this is a good time to look at it. The French company is the world's largest tire manufacturer and has been turning out tires in South Carolina since 1973, strictly on a non-union basis. Michelin employs 3500 workers in that state, and it plans another plant employing 1500 people in Alabama soon. Michelin's role in the South is mixed, good news and bad. Its investment of $400 to $500 million provides jobs in an area which badly needs them. At the same time this foreign investment exploits cheap labor and eliminates jobs in the older industrial regions of the North. "For multinational companies today," as a European trade union organizer told the *Washington Post*'s Dan Morgan, "there is a world market for labor. South Carolina and South Korea both offer the same advantage: cheap labor—there's no difference." So far labor has been completely unable to organize Michelin, despite the fact that its wage rates are substantially lower than those of rubber companies with union contracts. Nor is Michelin an isolated example; according to Mr. Morgan, of the 420 manufacturing facilities in Greenville County, only two companies, and these firms with fewer

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than 300 employees, have union representation.

That is the situation organized labor confronts, and this at a time when developments such as those at Youngstown make it obvious that American labor is facing new challenges. In myriad ways, from wages and working conditions to simple human dignity, organized labor in the United States has made a great contribution to industrial democracy. But, as the closings of the steel mills at Youngstown demonstrate, much more needs to be done. These closings, with the resultant mass unemployment and community disruption, were decided on by one criterion and one alone: company profits. Are the American people really satisfied to let such narrow economic considerations solely decide these critical issues? We think not, and unions must play a leading part in introducing a social criterion into such judgments. Both labor's concerns and the public interest must be taken into account in decisions like those taken at Youngstown, and this will require a larger, not a smaller role for labor. Over the years American unions have tended to stick to important but smaller issues like wages and hours, seniority and pensions; important as these are, they still tend to stop short of life-and-death decisions like those at Youngstown. With more Youngstowns looming in the future, it is more imperative than ever that labor and the community at large have a say in such sudden-death decisions. Whether George Meany retires this year or not, organized labor in the United States must begin to think in larger, more ambitious terms.

A PLAN FOR HEALTH . . .

A debate is beginning on national health insurance. Again. Contrary to a *Newsweek* story, which only reflected a general belief, national health insurance is not "an idea first proposed during FDR's New Deal" but dates back to the period before World War I—when the American Medical Association favored the notion and the AFL feared it as smacking of government control. The new debate has just a chance of being more rational than past ones, at least if it escapes submersion in the swampy question, Will Teddy, or Won't Teddy?

The first reason for this improvement is the public's ever increasing appreciation of the fact that the national health insurance debate has little to do with Big Bureaucracy sticking its nose into an intimate "doctor-patient relationship." The public knows that medical care is already an affair of large, complex, interacting *institutions*, with their attendant bureaucracies. The public deals with hospitals (which account for twice the amount of the medical care budget going for physicians' services) and with insurance companies; and it is increasingly aware of the role of the pharmaceutical industry and other purveyors of advanced medical technologies in determining what kind of health care is available to whom and at what price. The problem therefore is essentially one of *institutional* arrangements, not of personal trust in a kindly GP.

The second reason for a better debate is the general realization that "high cost" is not a danger national health insurance would introduce. It is the overwhelming reality of medical care as we have it right now. And it is not only the relentlessly growing portion of our GNP devoted to medical care that disturbs the public; it is the fact that this expenditure returns neither what the public wants nor reasonably needs in health care. The present spending still leaves tens of millions unable to pay bills or relegated to second-rate care, while other millions are the dubious beneficiaries of unnecessary operations, duplicate tests of marginal value, and high-technology efforts that cure (sometimes) but do not heal or care. More and more the public also recognizes that this outcome is due neither to accident nor to exceptional greed but to a system of economic incentives that can turn good intentions as well as selfish ones against the best interest of those in need.

Perhaps this growing sophistication about cost and incentives will even lead the public to apply to medical care what it already knows about household expense: that buying cheap may cost you more in the long-run. That is the objection many economists make, for instance, to catastrophic health insurance plans like the one sponsored by Senator Russell Long. By guaranteeing hospitals, physicians, and the developers and marketers of medical technology the full payment of exceptionally high individual bills, it would only further skew medicine in the direction of concentrated, high-technology practice, to the neglect of preventive care, early intervention and low-cost regular medical help. The costly and medically ineffective distortion of current medicine would be backed by federal dollars.

On the other hand, comprehensive health plans like the one Senator Kennedy has announced may not only be fairer in extending benefits more widely; they may well prove far less costly than either continuing the present system or modifying it in relatively minor ways. Of course sophistication about cost has to reach the point of recognizing that cost is cost whether it is paid through the government or through Blue Cross and private insurers. Senator Kennedy has modified his earlier proposals so that a large part of the program would be administered by private insurance companies. This was done, obviously enough, for political reasons: to defuse the tremendous political power of the insurance carriers by cutting them in on the pie. It *may* promise greater efficiency—there is a debate

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about the comparative records of private insurers, the Blue plans, and the government in keeping down administrative overhead. But the Kennedy modifications also derived from President Carter's wish that health care spending be "off the budget." (Carter's own plan promises to keep even more "off the budget" than Kennedy's.) Yet this is the time to remember that medical care which is "off the budget" is either not being delivered at all or is on somebody else's budget. The point about no-such-thing-as-a-free-lunch cuts both ways. Someone will pay, in suffering or in dollars.

One point where needless confusion may enter the present debate is on the notion of "piecemeal" reform, against which Senator Kennedy keeps warning. Kennedy's point is partly political and partly administrative. The administration's step-by-step plan offers recurring targets for political opposition by the medical lobbies. Moreover by starting with the catastrophic coverage element, popular among all income groups as well as with the lobbies, the administration is a little like a cook starting dinner with dessert: it may get everyone to the table but it probably won't lead to a balanced diet. Administratively, a drawn-out approach allows the existing medical system to shape each stage to the status quo, often in costly and distorting ways as occurred with Medicare and Medicaid—costs and distortions that are then invoked as arguments against proceeding to further reform! The administration replies that only its incrementalism stands a chance in Congress and, besides, the U.S. should hesitate before taking a step that is "irreversible." In anwer to that, economist Rashi Fein cites the maxim, "You can't cross a chasm in two steps!"

What shouldn't be forgotten, however, is that reform will be "piecemeal" in any case simply because no one measure—not even a comprehensive insurance scheme—is the answer. Humane and affordable health care will require changes in the education of physicians, the organization of hospitals, the conditions of workplaces, the styles and stresses of American living patterns. There is no cure-all. But we can certainly do better than our present $200 billion medical show.

. . . AND A CAP ON COSTS

The first challenge to any national health insurance proposal is America's skyrocketing hospital bills. That is why President Carter's effort to put a cap on hospital costs is crucial.

What the President is asking Congress for is legislation to limit increases in hospital costs. He tried the same thing last year, but he was defeated by the potent hospital lobby. Now the President is back again, this time with a watered-down version of his cost-control legislation, and once again his measure is in serious trouble. This year's proposal is similar to the compromise bill that remained bottled up in the House Commerce Committee last year but which was approved by the Senate. Mr. Carter's original proposal provided for mandatory controls. This year's gives hospitals until January to limit the rate of cost-increases to 9.7 percent voluntarily. If the hospitals fail to reach that goal, mandatory controls would then go into effect. Exemptions would be provided for states like New York that have their own cost-control programs.

The hospitals, of course, say that no controls are necessary. They argue that they are already being successful in the fight against inflation, and it is true that the rate of increase in hospital costs has slowed from 16 percent in 1976 to approximately 13 percent in 1978. Further, the hospitals have set a voluntary goal for 1979 of 11.6 percent. Nonetheless, standby controls may be essential. As the administration points out, much of the cut in the rate of hospital cost-increases has been achieved because of the mandatory controls imposed by nine state governments. Costs in these states were held last year to precisely 9.7 percent—the Carter goal. A larger question is why the hospitals should be subjected to mandatory anti-inflation controls when other items in the economy from food to steel are not. The answer is two-fold: because costs in hospitals are already astronomical and because the federal government pays a major share of hospital costs through Medicaid and Medicare. One way or another, if there is ever to be a chance for national health insurance, the time to curb hospital costs is now.

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Report from Dublin

A SPEAKER ON IRELAND

PRECURSOR OF DIPLOMACY TO COME?

AT OVER six feet tall and around 250 lbs in weight, Speaker of the House "Tip" O'Neill does not look the part of a John the Baptist. But when he arrived in Ireland towards the end of April accompanied by 14 Republican and Democratic congressmen, many Irish saw him as the Precursor, preparing the way for a major bid by President Carter to solve the Northern Ireland problems.

This thinking—more wishful than well-founded—is that Mr. Carter is preparing to mount an "Irish Camp David," putting himself forward as the mediator who would end the Northern Ireland "troubles" which have caused some 2,000 deaths and 20,000 injuries in the past 10 years.

The *Irish Press*, a leading daily paper which reflects gov-

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ernment thinking, expressed this sentiment editorially. "In the wake of President Carter's historic achievement of bringing together the Egyptians and the Israelis," it said, "it is surely neither inappropriate nor visionary to suggest that Congressman O'Neill's visit be used to urge him . . . to use his good offices with President Carter to try to bring about a similar historic shift of emphasis on Northern Ireland."

Whatever the intention behind the O'Neill party's visit to Ireland, it stirred things up on this side of the Atlantic. A nervous U.S. Embassy spokesman in Dublin had tried to play down its significance. He referred to it as "a low-key, fact-finding mission" and said it was "something of a private trip."

But Mr. O'Neill had just come from London where he had two-hour meetings with Mr. Callaghan and Mrs. Thatcher. While in Dublin he had a long private session with the Taoiseach, Mr. Jack Lynch, and the leaders of the other two opposition parties. And, next day, he paid a surprise visit to Belfast where he met privately with the leaders of the four main parties. The attempt to camouflage this as a low-key private trip could hardly succeed.

Certainly, the politicians in both parts of Ireland and in Britain took it much more seriously than that. Mr. O'Neill—along with Senator Edward M. Kennedy, Senator Daniel P. Moynihan and Governor Hugh C. Carey of New York—is one of a group of Irish-American politicians who last St. Patrick's Day issued a strong statement on Northern Ireland. [*Commonweal*, Apr. 27] This criticized British policy which had "gone beyond delay and neglect and has become a policy of conspicuous tilt in favor of the majority and to the detriment of the minority" in Northern Ireland. The statement favored a United Ireland with institutions linking the Protestant and Catholic communities and protecting the rights of each community.

During his Dublin visit, Mr. O'Neill was even more outspoken. He charged Britain with bearing a heavy responsibility for the failures of recent years on the political front. And he called on the post-election British government for "an early, realistic and major initiative" to get serious negotiations moving quickly towards a just and workable solution. Mr. O'Neill expressed his own desire to see Irish unity but agreed that this solution should not be imposed against the will of the people of Northern Ireland or at the expense of Irish lives.

Mr. O'Neill's remarks were very warmly received by politicians in the Republic, with the exception of Senator Conor Cruise O'Brien, now editor-in-chief of the London *Observer*, who dismissed them as "absolute rubbish." Pressure by Irish-American politicians on the American government to put pressure on the British government to put pressure on the Ulster Unionists would only lead to a dead end, he said.

But the Taoiseach, Mr. Lynch, and the Opposition leader, Dr. Garret FitzGerald, expressed the general sentiment when they praised Mr. O'Neill's political courage and statesmanship. The Irish people, too, got more than a little satisfaction at the British politicians' Pavlovian response to Mr. O'Neill's remarks. The British had fumed at Mr. O'Neill's cheek, accused him of ignorance, charged him with helping the IRA. But Mr. O'Neill had forced Northern Ireland—for a day or two anyway—into the forefront of the British election campaign, something which all parties had been working hand-in-hand to avoid.

Governor Carey turned the screw a little more when, a few days after Mr. O'Neill's speech, he called for economic sanctions against Britain if she did not withdraw physically and politically from Northern Ireland. (In this suggestion, Mr. Carey was going against the Dublin government's line which is that a precipitate British withdrawal, without the prior establishment of a solid and agreed political structure, would be potentially disastrous.)

Mr. O'Neill's visit almost certainly does not presage a Camp David style intervention by President Carter. Though he called two years ago for a just solution in Northern Ireland and promised substantial job-creating investment once a settlement is achieved, he has been careful to avoid direct involvement in a problem which the British government regards as an internal United Kingdom matter.

This does not, however, rule out either a visit to Ireland by President Carter (following in the footsteps of John F. Kennedy and Richard M. Nixon) or behind-the-scenes diplomatic pressure on Britain. Certainly, the Irish government is satisfied that the substance of Mr. O'Neill's remarks was known in advance to President Carter and represents his views.

The hope in Dublin is that the new British government under Margaret Thatcher will begin to feel the pressure of world opinion, led by the U.S., and make a new effort to launch a political initiative on Northern Ireland to put an end to the continuing tragic happenings there. DESMOND FISHER

(Desmond Fisher is Commonweal's *regular correspondent in Ireland.)*

Report from Notre Dame

MEMORIES AND HOPES

QUESTIONS ON AMERICAN CATHOLICISM

IS THE PROMISE of genuine historical-mindedness one of the great unrealized hopes of the Age of Renewal? Has there been little in the way of impressive history dealing with the Christian tradition produced during the last 15 years? Have young Catholics of the post-conciliar period grown up in a period when literally no one could offer them a strong and coherent account of what it meant to be a Catholic? Has there been a general loss of and interest in the Catholic past? Has there been a loss of a sense of continuing and vital tradition within Catholicism? Does post-conciliar Catholicism have a lessened regard for history? James Hitchcock maintains that the answer to all these questions is "Yes."

Has there been a loss of nerve among the intellectual leaders

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of American Catholicism? Can this be categorized as the decline of liberal Catholicism? Has the Catholic community's opening of itself to modern consciousness, since around the time of the Council, been far more problematic for the church than it is likely anyone expected during the Council itself? Has a degree of historical-consciousness entered too deeply into the souls of many Catholics as modern men and women to be removed by any act of the will? Has Catholicism, despite all of its problems, emerged as the major community in the world pledged to the defense of human rights, religious freedom, and the promotion of human dignity? David O'Brien maintains that the answer to all these questions is "Yes."

These positions were articulated by the two historians during the general session of the Spring meeting of the American Catholic Historical Association at the University of Notre Dame on April 6, 1979. It was not a debate. Neither speaker directly commented on the paper of the other. Nor was there a great deal of questioning of either speaker, probably due to the late evening scheduling of the event. The session was entitled "Two Perspectives on Tradition and Change in Recent American Catholicism" and that is what was presented.

Hitchcock, Professor of History at St. Louis University, is the author of *The Decline and Fall of Radical Catholicism* and *The Recovery of the Sacred*. He serves as Chairman of the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights, and editor of the theological quarterly *Communio*. Philip Gleason, of the University of Notre Dame, who chaired the session, used the terminology of Emerson in characterizing the speakers as representatives of the "party of memory" and "the party of hope" and had Hitchcock as the representative of the former speak first.

Gleason's characterization seemed apt for Hitchcock's paper, entitled "The Loss of History." Hitchcock maintained that while it was to be one of the major and appropriate tasks of renewal, to come to terms with the historical dimensions of Catholicism, post-conciliar Catholicism instead manifests a lessened regard for history "both in the loss of a sense of continuing and vital tradition, and a general loss of and interest in the Catholic past." Reformers were appropriately attentive to the Scriptures, but were forgetful of how the church also "develops organically from its New Testament roots." *Aggiornamento* has, he felt, inspired little in the way of impressive history and much of what has been done has focused on topics of current controversial interest—infallibility, contraception, the status of women, Modernism—and has been "likely to suffer from the authors' desire to make timely points." Much of the promise of renewal was ruined by the tendency to present every theological development in negative and destructive terms. "Instead of doctrinal development there was doctrinal contestation. Instead of seeking how new insights might be reconciled authentically with traditional teaching, the latter was directly assaulted." Informed and orderly organic development for the church has been impeded by a breaking away from the past and an ahistorical dwelling on the present. Hitchcock exhorted his audience to do what they could to fulfill the promise of a "genuine historical-mindedness," one of the "great unrealized hopes of the Age of Renewal."

David O'Brien, Professor of History at the College of the Holy Cross, is author of *The Renewal of American Catholicism*, and *American Catholics and Social Reform*. A staff worker for the Call to Action Conference, and consultant to many ministry and social action workers for more than a decade, he was a suitable spokesman for "the party of hope."

Concerning historical-consciousness, O'Brien maintained that around the time of the Council the Catholic community had opened itself to modern consciousness, an opening which had been postponed for half a century by the anti-Modernist repression. This opening has proven "far more problematic for the church than it is likely anyone expected during the Council." O'Brien felt, however, that "a degree of historical-consciousness, a tendency to see things in their concrete cultural context, to approach definition by historical reflection, and to accept change as at least one rule of life, has entered too deeply into our souls as modern men and women to be expunged by any act of the will."

O'Brien emphasized "the loss of nerve among the intellectual leaders of American Catholicism which I think can be categorized as the decline of liberal Catholicism." Quick to accommodate to American society, they became compromised when that society began to reveal serious flaws. Flaws in the church likewise made their impact on this group, undercutting their enthusiasm and optimism. O'Brien invited his hearers to the creative possibilities open to those who had given up neither on their church nor their society.

For O'Brien, the key answer to the question: what is renewal all about, was found in the deathbed testament of Pope John XXIII: "Now more than ever, certainly more than in past centuries, our purpose is to serve men as such and not only Catholics; to defend above all and everywhere the rights of the human person and not only those of the Catholic church." Citing similar statements of subsequent popes, O'Brien held that the social mission of the church which had long been identified as a somewhat extraordinary and secondary work of the church was now in fact the very nature of the church's presence in the world.

O'Brien granted that there had been wrong turns, mistakes and blunders in the church as there had been in society in general, but he asked: "Has not our church, for all of its problems, emerged as the major community in the world pledged to the defense of human rights, religious freedom, and the promotion of human dignity?" He concluded by maintaining that the possibilities of the liberal tradition, of history becoming a human project, man's responsibility, "in the great irony of our time, has found its home at last in the Catholic church."

Many questions remain in assessing the merit of each presentation. For example, has informed and orderly organic development for the church been impeded by some *a priori* refusals to allow such development to produce a different practical conclusion for the church, e.g., in the question of contraception, where exemplary historical research was avail-

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able? If there is a loss of vitality in the tradition, to what degree is such a loss of vitality attributable to such *a priori* 'stonewalling' on certain issues? Is not this what some would call a lack of genuine historical-mindedness? Is this properly respectful of a living tradition?

Similarly, given a tradition that is being dissented from on questions of contraception or divorce on a massive scale, is it realistic to expect it to be a rallying point for vigorous social mission, however clear such mission might be in conciliar or papal teaching? Indeed, can one really offer a thoroughgoing perspective on tradition and change in recent American Catholicism without significantly weighing the impact of issues like contraception and divorce, something neither paper did? I'd be pleased if these questions would go away, by receiving a more adequate resolution. Until they do, though, I suspect that memories of the past and hopes for the future will both be somewhat clouded. I say that by way of explanation rather than excuse, for I agree both with the desire for a more vital and coherent tradition and with the hope for the fulfillment of the social mission of the church.

Whatever one's perspective on these matters, the importance of hopes and memories was articulately expressed at Notre Dame.

RODGER VAN ALLEN

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Of several minds: *Frank Getlein*

ACKNOWLEDGING A DEBT

EDWARD M. CATICH & CHRISTIAN ART

FATHER EDWARD M. CATICH died in his studio at St. Ambrose College, Davenport, Iowa, on Good Friday night or the early morning of Holy Saturday. It was meet and just that he died when he did and where he did, for Catich was totally sensitive to the rhythms and meanings of the liturgical year and had, for most of his 73 years, lived a life in which the practice of his art, the profession of his faith and the exercise of his priesthood were all the same thing. Among the works in hand when he left was the fifteenth station of the cross for the college chapel, the last in a set Catich originally designed almost 30 years ago, saw rejected by the college at the time as too unsettling, and finally installed in 1976. In Davenport as elsewhere, the church finally caught up with, or at least came close to, some of its sons and daughters like Catich. Like so many of them, Ned Catich had no idea that he was being radical or revolutionary. He believed simply that his basic documents, the New Testament, Aristotle, St. Thomas, meant what they said and that an awful lot of subsequent and continuing ecclesiastical practice was in obvious and direct contradiction. Though he remained in obedience all his life, he certainly gave pain regularly to ecclesiastical administrators whenever the occasion arose.

One such occasion occasioned pain at the top. In the late 1940s, which was when I knew Catich, he began printing holy cards with a picture of a black Christ. Down through channels came word that the Vatican was not amused and he should please cut it out. After all, everybody knew Christ was not a black. He was an Italian, or possibly a German, who looked a lot like either Andrea del Sarto or Albrecht Dürer.

I got to know Catich as a fellow faculty member at St. Ambrose. About the time Ned was first drawing those heretical pictures, Joe Cunneen and I were completing the requirement for M.A.'s at Catholic University and contemplating the awful necessity of finding gainful employment. We had both spent a lot of time at C.U. reading our way through the complete publication lists of Sheed and Ward and Westminster Press and going to the daily Mass celebrated by Gilbert Hartke, O.P., who, as a theatrical, was one of the few priests I'd ever encountered who read Mass Latin as if it were a language, complete with meaning, nuance and rhythm, and intended to be heard by others in the room. It was like that.

One of the lights in our lives was *The Catholic Art Quarterly*, full of stimulating articles and pictures about what religious art ought to be and could be, as opposed to the "holy-o-graphs" we despised. It was published at St. Ambrose, its editors were Catich and a priestly colleague, William Kerrigan. Obviously, any school that could produce those two men and that magazine was a hotbed of hot Catholics, like us, out to rediscover and rebuild the Catholic church. We wrote off for jobs in the English Department, got them by return mail, which should have aroused our suspicion right then, but did not. In the event, Cunneen decamped, took a fling at acting, went to the Sorbonne and founded his own quarterly, *Cross Currents*, which he has edited ever since. I went to St. Ambrose.

Almost immediately I discovered that Catich and Kerrigan were widely regarded as a couple of kooks. Affectionately so regarded, but ineluctably so regarded. Few on the faculty had any notion of what they were up to in the *Quarterly*. For that matter, few ever saw it. I no longer find this as shocking as I did then, indeed I find it not shocking at all, quite normal, but at the time I was outraged, the more so, no doubt, because Cunneen was hobnobbing with actresses and going to Paris. When I got over my outrage, I found that far from being in some kind of provincial exile, I was, from my own, hot Catholic, point of view, actually in some kind of metropolitan center. It was my first experience of Midwestern Catholicism, derived from

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the middle-class, thoughtful, politically mature German immigration of the 19th century. The whole culture was in sharp contrast to my own New England Catholicism, derived from the slightly later, dirt poor, forced illiterate, politically savage Irish immigration. The church may be one, holy, Catholic and apostolic, but in those days the church in Boston and the church in Chicago were like two different religions and the differences got stronger when you moved on to Wisconsin, Iowa and Minnesota.

These people were relaxed and easy in their Catholicism, which was simply a way of life and thought rather than a cause, a crusade, at once a defended fortress and a conquering host, the way it was back home. An example: my colleague in the English Department, Father Pat McCoy, had somewhere picked up the art of running a telephone switchboard. Every day at noon, he would take over the board so the operator could distribute the faculty mail. Pat invariably greeted callers with, "St. Ambrose, the college that's built on a bluff and operated on the same principle." Try that in New England and you'd find yourself third curate in Grover's Corner. Pat also spent his summers at San Miguel, the artists' colony outside Mexico City because, he averred, it was illegal to wear a Roman collar in Mexico so he was forced to wear those wild shirts. Relaxed, easy, in my experience downright un-Catholic.

Anyway, it was that kind of Catholicism that was able to tolerate people like Catich and Kerrigan. They were kooks, but kooks were entitled like everybody else.

Catich's great achievements were in calligraphy, both in practice and in research. His own normal writing style was, in my memory at least, closer to the justly famous "chancery hand" of the Renaissance, but in the history of his art his most important work was his life-long study of Roman lettering which resulted in *The Trajan Inscription in Rome* and *The Origin of the Serif*, both of which really were revolutionary and widely accepted and praised in a field most scholars, let alone people, are hardly aware exists. Most people, however, including scholars, were enchanted with the writing of a plain Catich note saying he was not in the studio, would be back in an hour.

In brutal summary, his study of the Trajan and other Roman epigraphs led him to conclude that the letters had, in fact, been created by a brush, then faithfully copied by carvers, in contradiction of the accepted view that sought the forms of that marvelous alphabet in the nature of the mallet and chisel. It is unlikely that Catich could have arrived at that original insight without himself being the master he was of calligraphy in practice.

He was a devoted coin collector, one of the automatic temptations of the scholarship of calligraphy. And he played chess by postcard with some very fast company, an avocation right out of his Aristotelian-Thomistic belief in art as "right reason in making."

I left Catich at that point. I think right reason in making is incalculably important in art. Its absence drives me out of my mind in the plays of Sam Shepherd, for instance, or the paintings of Norman Blume. But there has to be more to it than right reason. Right reason can give you Mendelsohn or the Pre-Raphaelites, but not Bach, Beethoven or even Mozart, whose passion for right reason in making music led him far beyond the reach of reason. Right reason has, in fact, given us most of the picky little movements that have cluttered up the American art scene ever since the fading of the gloriously irrational Abstract Expressionism. Kenneth Noland and Andy Warhol are both exemplars of right reason in making art and you can have 'em. Art, I believe, is not either/or but *both* Apollo and Dionysius and the more the both the better the art.

That's an irrelevant but necessary disclaimer. Catich would never forgive me if I thought that and failed to say it in what is, after all, a kind of epigraph.

His importance is more important than any such demurrer. For myself, he, along with a few others, impressed ineradicably on my mind that art means something, relates to the outside world in some fashion or other and that this outside world is not just an excuse for making beautiful brushstrokes. That perception was at the center of Catich's theories of Christian art and, acknowledging a debt, I've been living off it ever since.

For all of us, he and a few like him kept alive, preserved and renewed the spirit of an immeasurably important Western institution in a period when that institution was seriously trying to turn itself into dead stone. Rest in peace.

FRANK GETLEIN

Mortality and vitality

OF WOMEN & BISHOPS

A WELCOME DEVELOPMENT IN MINNESOTA

PRESS REPORTS were sparse, but a significant forward step in the relations between men and women was made when the bishops of Minnesota under the leadership of Archbishop John E. Roach issued two papers on the role of women in contemporary society. Never mind that the two papers seemed, in part, to contradict each other. The important thing was that a group of bishops addressed the subject seriously on the basis of study and discussion—a first—and that their spokesman is vice president of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops. It is the most hopeful sign since Bishop Carroll Dozier's pastoral letter acknowledging that women have endured "a long and subtle servitude."

It is truly interesting to imagine how different the situation of women might be, and what a different shape the struggle for women's rights might have taken, if the church had acknowledged the reality of women's life long ago. The first of the two papers issued by the Minnesota bishops does that mildly enough:

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"For too long society has treated women in a cavalier fashion, guarded, protected and nurtured them as if they were children, without consideration of their own abilities and desires. Too often women have been guided only into the roles of mother, daughter, wife, sister, teacher. Too often women have been valued for only those skills and strengths which support the work and strivings of men, or only tolerated in jobs for which there is no man willing or able—and then paid less than a man would be paid. . . ."

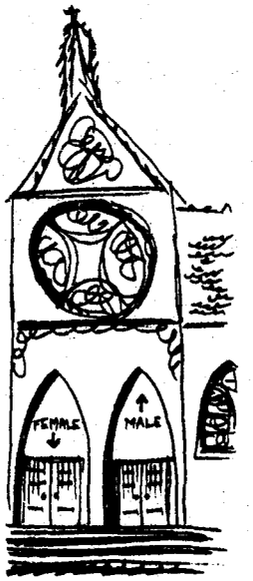
The bishops' second statement, issued at the same time, because some of the bishops could not agree on the first, more or less inadvertently gave evidence of why women are thought of only as "mother, daughter, wife, sister, teacher"—in other words only *in relation to* men. It seems to be almost impossible for men, let alone bishops, to think of them in any other way.

This second paper, said by the bishops to stress the "complementary" relationship of the sexes, certainly views the woman as primarily a homemaker. All other women are exceptions. In some of its wording the paper actually seems to imply that women are entitled to economic justice only in some tangential way related to their function as mothers:

"Our concern has little value if we do not speak out for her—(they are speaking here of the single mother, widowed or divorced, who must support her family)—and work with her to eliminate unjust discrimination against her. Hence, we insist on *her right especially* (italics mine), but on the right of other working women as well, to receive wages equal to those of a man doing similar work."

What this actually says is that women in the work place should have justice only because it is necessary for mothers who *must* work to have it. This bespeaks the lurking fear that women, once given justice, will not be available with those skills and strengths, which, in the words of the first paper, "support the work and strivings of men." Professor Catherine Lupori, who worked on the draft of the first paper, also pointed out that other wording in the second paper referring to "women who work outside the home *even though* they have children to be cared for" implied disapproval even when it was necessary for mothers to work. This, of course, is a conditional view of justice.

If there is an unreconciled contradiction here it is one that other American men have shared. When the author Pearl Buck, who grew up in China, returned to this country to live, she was astounded and angered by the relationship between the sexes she found here and wrote about it in a little book, *Of Men and Women*—



issued first in 1941 and again in 1971 shortly before she died.

"As to what men are going to do with women, I do not pretend to know," she wrote. "But I know I have never seen in any country—and I have seen most of the countries of the world—such an unsatisfactory relationship between men and women as there is in America. To know what one can have and to do with it, being prepared for no more, is the basis of equilibrium . . . what is wrong in America is the way we are educating women . . . For men do think of women, if at all, in the old, simple, traditional ways. Then women ought to be prepared for this sort of life and shaped through childhood and girlhood for what is to come . . . To educate women to think, therefore, so that they need the personal fulfillment of activity and participation in all parts of life is acute cruelty when they are not allowed this fulfillment. They should be educated not to think beyond the demands of simple household affairs or beyond the small arts and graces of pleasing men, who seem always to want mental rest."

This lament of hers is underlined by some facts unearthed by sociologist David Riesman when he was writing about the future of women ten years ago and more. He noted that, at the turn of the century in America, most educated women accepted the fact that, whether they were to use their educations in any way useful to society—in social work, for example, like Jane Addams—or not they would remain unmarried. By the middle of the thirties, however, women college graduates were being married in numbers equal to women in the general population—except for Catholic women graduates where the proportion was only 50%. Catholic men, he noted, were still made uneasy by educated women and preferred not to choose them as wives.

It is quite likely, given the above and the stress on motherhood in Catholic thought, and because even today most of the clergy leave home for the minor seminary at an age at which they are still strongly mother-oriented, they may find it even more difficult than other men to think of women in other terms. But Pearl Buck thought that all American men were prone to do that, and to make surrogate mothers of all women.

"There are too many nice and rather sad American women who patiently accept even their middle-aged and old men as perennial 'boys' . . . this perpetual mothering degrades the man and hinders his development into his fullest manhood."

Even to attempt to struggle with the problem of attitude as the bishops do in these two papers is progress. And there is wonderful cause for hope in their affirmation of the following: "Our pastoral concern goes out to all women in pain and alienation, to the woman who hears God's call to serve through a variety of ministries or leadership positions but is blocked by tradition." Here is recognition that tradition—not form or function—is the stumbling block and that all Marys, like the prototypical Mary of Bethany, may one day be free to choose "the better part."

ABIGAIL McCARTHY

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SHOULD A BISHOP BE PRIMARILY A TEACHER & PASTOR?

The leadership we need

JOHN JAY HUGHES

THE AMBIVALENCE of many commentaries on the Pope's recent visit to Mexico was due to a quality in his utterances as little perceived as it was understood: their dialectical character. Conservatives were encouraged by his affirmation of the primarily spiritual nature of the gospel message, and his emphasis on the unity of the people of God in our common faith. But they were dismayed by the very different statements which brought joy to progressives: the reaffirmation of the teaching of Vatican II and the recent popes about human rights and social justice. To many observers all this sounded like political tactics: something for everyone. Hence the understandable but erroneous conclusion that the Pontiff had sought a compromise which involved concessions to both right and left wings, while remaining himself in the uncommitted middle.

A careful reading of the full record reveals something quite different from compromise. The tension between the pastoral exhortations to unity and the prophetic denunciations of injustice was real— and intended. The Pope was giving a lived example of the dialectical imperative imposed on all who share with him the episcopal office. This requires the bishop to be in two places at once. He is at the center of his own church, the focus of its unity and its link with all other churches through his membership in the college of bishops presided over by the Bishop of Rome. But the bishop is also summoned to the church's periphery, as a sacramental sign of the church to the world. The greatest bishops have always been those who have resisted the temptation to resolve this tension by concentrating on one pole of the dialectic at the expense of the other. Measured by this criterion, the performance of John Paul II in Mexico was a notable success.

Because bishops have so often sought to diminish the tension inherent in their office by emphasizing its institutional functions at the expense of prophecy, there is a deep longing in the people of God today for leaders who, like the old prophets of Israel, will thunder their "Thus says the Lord" regardless of all institutional and human considerations. Only those of the most relentlessly ecclesiastical outlook do not share this desire. It is, nonetheless, more romantic than realistic. Moreover, the demand that bishops be prophets reflects a simplistic pre-Vatican II ecclesiology which concentrates too exclusively on the hierarchy, and fails to appreciate the rich variety of the Spirit's gifts, and the fact that they are by no means confined to those in positions of official leadership.

The prophet is inevitably one-sided. His "Thus says the Lord" arises out of an intense personal vision of the truth as it bears upon a particular historical situation. But truth is always larger than any one person's ability to grasp or express. Hence the paradox: the clearer the prophet's vision, the more partial it will be. This explains why prophets are more often the focus of controversy than of unity. The demand that bishops be prophets reflects a confusion of roles in the church. All sacred history shows that prophetic utterance is the characteristic mode of speech, not of the official leaders of the people of God, but of lonely, Spirit-gifted individuals whose clarity of vision places them far in advance of their day and makes them a sign of contradiction to their contemporaries, even to many of undoubted good will and courage.

What we *are* entitled to look for from bishops is *openness to prophecy*. This was the quality which enabled the scholarly Pope Innocent III (1198-1216) to perceive beneath the heretical tendencies of the new twelfth century spirituality of poverty the medicine needed by the ailing church of his day, and to win for the church two of our greatest saints: Francis and Dominic. What we get all too often instead is the pious if learned orthodoxy of Gregory XVI (1831-46). Unable to discern in the revolutionary ideas of the impatient and volatile French priest-prophet, Lamennais, the means of liberating the nineteenth century church from its entangling alliances with reactionary governments, Gregory harshly condemned the concept of a free church in a free, pluralistic state which, one hundred and thirty years later in wholly changed circumstances, was to be approved by a general council.

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THERE IS another flaw in the demand that bishops be prophets. The prophets, if left to themselves, would turn the church into a sect: the purified, gathered congregation of those who accept the prophets' dynamic vision of truth and are willing to live in accord with it: a church of saints, not of sinners. Again, it is only the most obdurate institutionalist who does not feel the singular force of the prophetic demand for total commitment. But again, the verdict of sacred history is clearly against this demand, unless it is tempered by tenderness and patience towards those who are weak in faith and incapable of such unqualified commitment.

We are back with the dialectical tension in the Pope's Mexican utterances. His task, like that of any bishop, is to defend the church's catholicity. With the prophets, the Pope and his fellow bishops must speak their "Thus says the Lord" regardless of the consequences: hence the Holy Father's denunciation of those who "hide bread from the poor." But against the prophets, Pope and bishops must insist that the church remain the church of sinners, of the only half-committed, of those whose faith is so weak that it seems, at times, to be little better than superstition: hence the Pope's reminder at Puebla that Jesus "opens his message of conversion to everybody without excluding the very publicans." This means vindicating the church's obligation to the shabby, tawdry, impure, unattractive. It is an unenviable task, requiring a special brand of toughness and courage. To the prophets any defense of Christians too uncommitted to accept the prophetic message will seem cowardly temporizing. To the complacent and too often self-righteous defenders of the Establishment against the prophets' indictment, any protection extended to those responsible for such criticism will seem like betrayal.

Prior to Vatican II the concern of the official leadership in American Catholicism was weighted heavily towards the institutional pole of the dialectic. To instances of social injustice the bishops applied the band-aid of charity. Seldom did they address the structural roots of injustice. At the Council the bishops may be said to have rediscovered the social dimension of the gospel. Judged by the statements emanating from the Bishops' Conference, issues of social justice are now high on the official agenda. Why is it that we are still so widely perceived as a church more interested in its own institutional concerns than in people? Doubtless misinformation and prejudice play an important role. But there are at least two further reasons why episcopal pronouncements on social justice are seldom taken at face value.

First, there are bishops who support the new emphasis on social justice, but consider institutional concerns paramount. Inevitably they give a low priority to implementing official statements about social justice. If the thesis of a dialectical imperative inherent in the bishop's office is correct, surely it requires that bishops refuse the tempting choice between the concerns of the institution and those of the world. During his Mexican tour the Pope appeared to be asking the bishops to affirm the vital importance of *both* concerns, and to accept the inevitable tension of attending upon ecclesial and secular concerns at the same time.

Second, there are bishops who fail to implement certain statements about social justice because they disagree with the official line in some particular. A priest in close contact with the Bishops' Conference reported in late 1977 that many bishops were opposed to the ratification of the Panama Canal treaties (then under debate), and to the abolition of capital punishment. However, because the Conference had endorsed both measures, no bishops were willing to voice publicly their sometimes strongly maintained private dissent from the official line. The policy was to confront disunity inside the church and out with a facade of monolithic unity on the part of the bishops, even on matters not of faith.

This policy bears bitter fruit. People who are concerned about social justice are first led to believe that church leaders share this concern. Then, when in many places little is done to

implement the statements about social justice, we are accused of indifference and hypocrisy. Surely greater openness, and possibly even the issuing of majority and minority reports, on matters about which Catholics may legitimately differ, would be preferable to pretending to a unity which does not exist.

The guarantee of the church's unity is not a facade erected by political means, and maintained by appeals not to let the side down, but rather the presence of the Holy Spirit, who holds together in fruitful though often painful tension a disparate family of sinners, who, without the Spirit's presence, would long since have disintegrated and been consigned to the museum of history, like so many other human institutions. This was precisely the Holy Father's message to the bishops at Puebla. "The unity of bishops comes not from human calculations and strategy, but from on high: from serving one Lord, from being animated by one Spirit, and from loving one and the same church. . . . It is unity around the gospel." About such matters as the Pamana Canal and capital punishment we can surely tolerate pluralism.

THIS RAISES the whole question of the quality of our present leadership. Some of the most widely publicized criticisms of the American bishops in recent years have been grave violations of charity and truth. At the same time no sober, fair-minded, and informed observer of the American Catholic scene with a knowledge of our history will quarrel with the statement that our leadership today is disconcertingly weak—lacking confidence and direction.

It is no offense against charity to state publicly what is so

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widely acknowledged in private. This would be the case only if the ability to lead were identical with virtue. The assumption of such an identity is one cause of our present disarray. Were virtue the sole criterion for leadership, Jesus would hardly have passed over his closest friend, John, and chosen Peter instead as leader of the Twelve.

Personal virtue in combination with leadership ability is obviously the ideal. It is exemplified amongst American presidents by Abraham Lincoln. But the present occupant of the White House is an example of personal virtue with little capacity for leadership; while Franklin Roosevelt is an instance of fairly successful leadership although criticized for a certain lack of personal virtue.

With rare exceptions our bishops are men of impressive personal goodness. The best are deeply edifying. But too often they react to others' initiatives instead of leading themselves. It was not always so. Past generations have produced leaders of real distinction: Ireland, Spalding, Hughes, McQuaid, Keane, and Gibbons are names that come readily to mind. Is it mere nostalgia for a past golden age that makes it impossible to identify their successors today? What has gone wrong?

One must be fair. Ours is not an age which is friendly to leaders. The worldwide protest against authority (which in reality is a desperate cry for authority of the right kind) takes a heavy toll even on leaders of real promise. But the roots of our present disorder lie deeper.

The leaders just mentioned lived in an age in which anti-Catholicism was open and aggressive. Paradoxically, this facilitated their task. In the face of enemies without, church leaders of a past generation adopted the posture of pugnacious defensiveness for which their Celtic temperament had a special affinity. They were supported by a Catholic body far more united than that which confronts the bishops today. For whatever internal conflicts American Catholics may have experienced in the century between the close of the Civil War and the close of Vatican II, against their numerous and readily identifiable enemies without they were united. Within the fold there was a docility in matters of doctrine, devotion, and even authority so different from anything we know today, that it is only by a considerable effort that we can recall it, or believe that this system was still in full running order less than two decades ago.

When one reflects that our present leaders received their entire formation in this utterly different church, and that the more senior among them at least owe their present positions to the fidelity with which they served that church, one is hardly surprised at their failure since the Council to give us the leadership we need. On the contrary, one must admire their success, however limited and intermittent, in adjusting to suddenly changed conditions for which nothing in their training or previous experience had prepared them.

The very qualities which contributed to effective leadership in the past, however, militate against it in the wholly different situation now prevailing. Anti-Catholicism is still alive and well in this country: in the media, in the elite universities, in the upper echelons of business, government, and the great foundations. But it is a very different thing from the anti-Catholicism which confronted the immigrant church of a previous day. Anti-Catholicism is today the anti-Semitism of the left. Our enemies now crusade against us under the banner of toleration, liberalism and progress. This attack cannot possibly be countered by the aggressive pugnaciousness of the past, with its inevitable oversimplifications of complex issues. We need a more sophisticated approach. We are not getting it as long as a spokesman for the American bishops can complain publicly that the Carter administration is not "grateful" for the bishops' support of the Panama Canal treaties. (One wonders, incidentally, what St. Ignatius of Antioch would have said about such a complaint.)

The lack of discernment indicated by that protest is, additionally, a serious handicap in confronting the new pluralism and dissent within the church. When combined (as unfortunately it often is) with such vestiges of the old pugnaciousness as still remain, it produces angry confrontations, mutual suspicion and polarization. The very quality which, in the past, enabled bishops to build up the church's unity is today destructive of unity.

FORTUNATELY, we have begun to get better leadership. Despite opposition from the entrenched kingmakers, the Apostolic Delegate since July 1973, Archbishop Jean Jadot, has sought quietly to refashion the American hierarchy. American Catholics owe a considerable debt of gratitude to him, and to Paul VI who appointed him. One hopes that a new vigorous Pope will give fresh support to the delegate's efforts. They need to be expanded, however, in two directions: by broadening the present selection process, and by looking for leadership from people hitherto excluded from consideration.

No longer is the selection of American bishops based solely on the confidential lists prepared by the existing bishops. Priests' views are now solicited as well. It appears, however, that there is still little consultation of the laity in this country, though this is now common elsewhere. It is a matter of record, for instance, that the views of laypeople were important factors in the appointment of Albino Luciani to the see of Venice, and of Basil Hume to Westminster.

Additionally, we need to re-examine the present criteria for church leadership. It is widely assumed in this country that previous experience in church administration is the indispensable prerequisite for appointment to the episcopate. The bishop of a smaller diocese normally comes from some administrative or desk job. The major positions are reserved for those already in episcopal orders. This system assumes that the bishop is first and foremost an administrative officer.

Where is the theological justification for this view of the bishop's office? Is it not abundantly clear that the sounder part at least of our theological tradition, up to and including Vatican II, conceives of the bishop as primarily a *teacher* and *pastor*? And all church history—the example of our best bishops and greatest popes—shows that the really good teacher and pastor *is also a competent administrator*, or at least that he becomes one when he must.

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But the opposite is *not* true. The efficient administrator is *not* necessarily a good teacher or pastor. And unlike administrative ability, which can be learned 'on the job' if necessary by an intelligent person of prudence, courage and compassion (the specifically episcopal virtues), excellence as a teacher and pastor *cannot* be developed from scratch amidst the pressures of a bishop's work. Either he brings these indispensable qualities with him, or a bishop will never have them at all.

Are we well served by a selection process which puts a premium on administrative ability, and then looks for solutions to the grave problems of faith in today's world from people who, however gifted as organizers and managers, and however endowed with good will, all too often lack the theological depth to discern, or the eloquence to articulate, the answers to these problems? Is such a system not a grave injustice to bishops themselves?

Recent episcopal appointments show that greater importance is being attached to pastoral ability. While this is welcome, one must ask how much attention is given to the function which Vatican II clearly regards as pre-eminent amongst the bishop's duties: the office of preacher and teacher? Is it a sign of ecclesial health that apart from Fulton Sheen (long retired) it is difficult to name a single one of the more than three hundred Catholic bishops in this country who has written a book of which the world has taken any notice? American Catholics assume that this situation is normal. A glance elsewhere shows that it is not.

No less than eight of the twenty-one present diocesan bishops in West Germany, including all three cardinals, are former university professors. Most were called directly to diocesan leadership from university chairs. The case of Joseph Ratzinger, who inside of a week went from simple priest and professor at a provincial university to be Archbishop of Munich and Cardinal, was exceptional only as an extreme instance of an accepted pattern. Whenever a West German diocese falls vacant, professors are always amongst the leading candidates. Nor is the German situation unique. Both present Irish Primates went directly to their present positions from university chairs. Only the unavailability of current works of reference makes it impossible to state how many of Ireland's twenty-six diocesan bishops are former academics, but the number is certainly not small.

IF ONE were to ask Catholics in a vacant American diocese whether they wanted "a scholar" for their chief pastor, it is unlikely that the suggestion would arouse much enthusiasm. One can hardly expect people to opt for what they have never experienced. Suppose, however, that people were asked whether they wanted "a bishop able to expound the relationship between our age-old faith and modern life." An insightful observer of American Catholicism suggests that the answer to such a question would be strongly positive. Fr. Walter J. Burghardt, S.J., drew attention recently to

> the increasing number of educated faithful who are disaffected: men and women who expect from their ministers a deeper insight into the gospel, into the mind of Christ, than they are getting; men and women for whom the Sunday fare is spiritual pap, who return home still hungry for God's real word to them, who wonder how five to ten years of seminary education could leave so many so ignorant, so incapable of putting a subject and a verb together; men and women who are prisoners of their pastors' inability to interpret the gospel for them, to talk intelligently and passionately about Christ and his church, about God's grace and man's resurrection, about the Eucharist and the hungers of all humans.

Vatican II has re-emphasized that " the duty of teaching is conspicuous among the principal duties of bishops" (*Decree on Bishops*, 12). While this is no reason for limiting the episcopate to men of learning, only the most anti-intellectual will dispute the unique qualifications for episcopal ministry of men who have demonstrated through the written and spoken word that they are truly articulate messengers of the gospel.

At the last Roman Episcopal Synod a man who is himself such a messenger, Archbishop Bernardin of Cincinnati, stated that "because of their teaching positions in colleges, universities and seminaries, theologians de facto often exercise more influence than the bishops in today's catechetical scene." He complained that open conflicts between bishops and theologians had harmed church unity, and called upon his fellow bishops to "take the initiative in opening fraternal dialogue, not to silence theologians, but to challenge them to develop their sense of pastoral responsibility."

Such dialogue could only benefit from the presence in the episcopal conference of a few men at least from the ranks of professional theologians. Moreover, any fair account of the reasons for hostile confrontations between the hierarchy and theologians (the nature of which is often exaggerated) must include not only insufficiently developed pastoral responsibility on the part of some theologians, but the inferiority complex displayed by some bishops in dealing with theologians.

If the type of scholar-bishop found elsewhere is still inconceivable to most American Catholics, this is due in part to the fact that few of them have ever encountered such a personage in the flesh. Equally important is the still vigorous strain of anti-intellectualism which makes Catholics in this country assume that intellectuals are impractical dreamers unfit for leadership. American universities do not share this assumption. It would not be difficult to compile a lengthy list of past and present university presidents in the United States, including some of the most eminent, who attained distinction in their respective fields of scholarship before being called to administrative positions. How long must we American Catholics continue to make do with less than our best?

Not the least exciting characteristics of our new Holy Father are his intellectual power and eloquence. Though his academic career was terminated at the early age of thirty-eight by his elevation to the episcopate, his bibliography is already longer than that of many full-time scholars. And even in translation, the sermon he preached at the inauguration of his ministry as Supreme Pastor on October 22nd of last year was profoundly moving. The London *Tablet* called it "the best papal oratory

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since Pius XII," a judgment which many consider too modest.

Is it too much to hope that a Pope who has shown himself to be so articulate a spokesman of the gospel will insist that those in this country who share a measure of his eloquence (some of them already in episcopal orders) be identified and placed in positions from which they can give inspiration and hope to the people of God in this time of confusion and discouragement?

Despite the flood of words hurled at us by the modern media—or perhaps precisely because of this inundation—people today are as hungry as ever for the Word of God. Today, more than ever, the people of God need the impassioned and clear proclamation of the Word if they are to fulfill the commission given to them in baptism and confirmation: "to shine like stars in a dark world and proffer the word of life, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation" (Phil. 2, 15f).

WITH FRIENDS LIKE LEBANON'S, WHO NEEDS ENEMIES?

From nation to factions

JOHN J. DONOHUE

LEBANON at present is "distracted from distraction by distraction." The revolution of the venerable ascetic Ayatollah Khomeini has taken front stage. Iran is some 500 miles away and the Iranians are not Arabs. But, no matter, they are Muslims. Lebanese crowds moved through the Muslim-dominated quarters firing automatic rifles, clapping and chanting; "Today Iran, tomorrow Palestine," and orators declaimed the irresistible force of "the people's will." The shouting is over now, but its traces remain on the walls of West Beirut, Sidon, Tyre and Tripoli where colored posters of Yasir Arafat and Ayatollah Khomeini form the latest stratum of a thick deposit of posters celebrating martyrs and political anniversaries.

Khomeini's feat has had little resonance in the Christian areas of Lebanon, except for the slight tremor of fear which talk of an Islamic Republic provokes. In East Beirut Christian students are hanging posters proclaiming that despite Carter, Lebanon will remain free. Many Christians are convinced that the U.S. plan has been to hand Lebanon over to Syria and to encourage emigration of Christians. The presence or absence of a Shah matters little. What matters to them is their continued independent existence.

They are still smarting from the savage bombardment of their quarters by the Syrian troops of the Arab Deterrent Force (ADF) last summer, and from the American and French responses to that operation. The toll was some 600 killed, 25,000 wounded, and 35,000 dwellings destroyed. The Christians had expected a sympathetic response from the United States with its verbal insistence on human rights, and from France with its historical ties to Lebanon. But after all the death and destruction, Vice President Mondale proclaimed that the Syrians were not responsible for what happened in Lebanon, and the then French Foreign Minister, de Guiringaud, stated a few days later that the one responsible was former President Chamoun, leader of the Christian Lebanese Front.

It was all rather confusing. In late 1976, the Christians welcomed the entry of the Syrian troops, the bulk of the 30,000 ADF, who came to put an end to the 18-month war which had torn the country apart. Less than two years later the same Syrians were shelling the Christian quarters of Beirut. The Christians were crying "genocide," but American and French spokesmen adopted the official Syrian position and shouted back "provocation." This official view is based on the presumption that the ADF is the legitimate force of order in Lebanon under control of President Elias Sarkis and will remain such until the Lebanese army is rebuilt. The only basis of accord among the multiple religious and political groups in Lebanon, so the reasoning runs, is cooperation with the legitimate authority. This the Christians were not doing.

The analysis is convenient, even logical; but it is terribly naive. A quick look at the division of power in Lebanon today, the proliferation of foreign armies and the ubiquity of armed militias is enough to convince anyone that declarations of support for a united, sovereign, independent and integral Lebanon pivoting around the legitimate authority are the stuff of poetry and myth. They have nothing to do with the political and military reality.

In the south of Lebanon there are the Israelis who act through a small contingent of the Lebanese army supported by Lebanese Front militias. They control the frontier with Israel. Then there are the 6,000 men of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) composed of an assortment of foreign soldiers and officers. Move north a bit and there are the men of the Palestinian armed resistance. From Sidon north to West Beirut the Syrians of the Arab Deterrent Force (ADF) control with a variety of Palestinians, Jumblatists, Nasserites, Marxists and others. The zone of East Beirut up to Jbeil is dominated by the Christian Lebanese Front militias. In the

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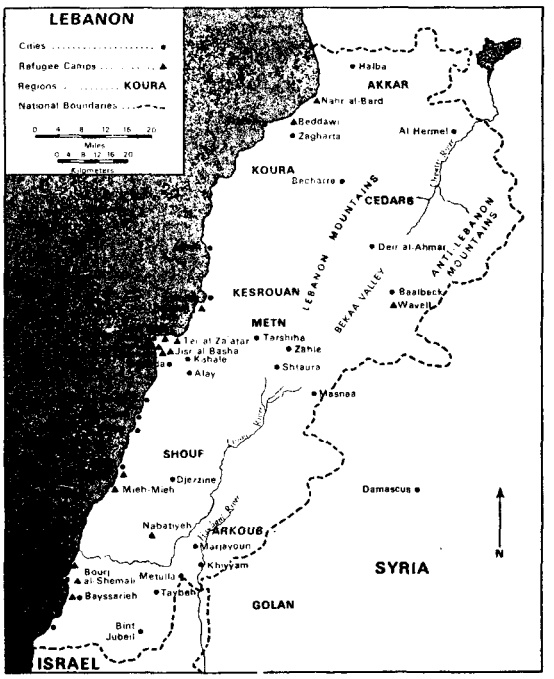

Map reprinted from *Lebanon in Crisis: Participants and Issues*, ed. by P. Edward Haley and Lewis W. Snider, Syracuse University Press, 1979. By permission of the publisher.

north the Syrians are in control in collaboration with the Sunni leader of Tripoli, Rashid Karame, and the Maronite feudal lord of Zghorta, former President Suleiman Frangieh. The Biqa' plain to the east is fully controlled by the Syrians.

On the political level, President Sarkis is also hard-pressed to find supporters. He is faced by at least two oppositions, if not three. The Lebanese Front led by former President Camille Chamoun groups his National Liberal Party and the Kata'ib Party of Pierre Gemayel. Both have armed militias. They are heavily Maronite Catholic and claim to be defending an independent Lebanon against a Syrian takeover and the settlement of 400,000 Palestinians in Lebanon. The other opposition is the National Movement made up of a variety of nationalist, Nasserite, and Marxist groups along with some independents. Within the National Movement is a group of pro-Syrian parties and organizations formed during the 18-month war under the title of the Patriotic Front; this group sometimes acts independently to support Syrian positions not always acceptable to the other groups in the National Movement. However, since the Baghdad summit and Iraqi-Syrian coordination, the National Movement presents a more homogeneous front. All the parties and organizations in the movement have armed militias. Then there are the Shiites who claim to be the most numerous of the 17 officially recognized religious communities in Lebanon. They too have a militia.

It would take a heavy dose of charisma and extremely astute political maneuvering for a powerless president to assert his authority, legitimate though it may be. President Sarkis is neither charismatic nor politically astute.

Moreover, to unravel the main threads of the Lebanese socio-political fabric and resplice them is next to impossible as long as Lebanon cannot be isolated, at least momentarily, from the surrounding problems of the area. The threads are snarled into a series of regional problems which frustrates all the partial attempts at repair.

These snarls, in fact, explain why Lebanon is worse off now than it was two years ago at the end of the war.

THE TURNING-POINT was Sadat's visit to Jerusalem in November 1977. Up to that point Syria had been boasting that it was Syria who would decide whether there would be war or peace in the Middle East. Sadat's visit deflated the Syrians, and actually isolated them. Lebanon became a strategic necessity for Syrian defense.

Syria put aside all pretense of disarming the Palestinians and pressuring them to limit their presence in south Lebanon (two tasks assigned to the ADF by the Riadh-Cairo summits of 1976). Besides, the Palestinians were south of the Litani river, the "red-line" beyond which Israelis would not tolerate ADF troops. Syria turned, instead, to tightening its grip on the parts of Lebanon where its troops had freedom of movement. The signals of the change were a clash between Syrians and the new Lebanese Army in February 1978 at a barracks just outside Beirut, then a clash with Christian militias in a southern suburb of Beirut in April. The two incidents were punctuated by a massive Israeli invasion of south Lebanon in March. Syria looked on quietly from the other side of the "red-line."

A Lebanese government crisis in April and May illustrated that Syria was finding it difficult to get a firm grasp on Lebanese politics. There were many obstacles but the most obvious one was the Lebanese Front which was intent on pointing out that the ADF was not controlled by President Sarkis but was an occupying force controlled from Damascus.

The Syrians found the apparent key to their problems in May. They split the Lebanese Front by weaning away former President Suleiman Frangieh, thus assuring that the north would be under their control and the remainder of the Front would be hemmed into central Lebanon where strategically located Syrian troops could easily administer the coup de grace when occasion provided. The pretext for a punitive action was not long in coming. The Kata'ib militia overreacted to Frangieh's "treachery" and to continued provocations from his strong men by assassinating Frangieh's son along with some 30 others in mid-June. The scene was set for Syria's "summer campaign" aimed at shelling the remnant of the Lebanese Front into submission.

That summer of 1978 began with a touch of irony and high drama. The irony was in the fact that the Syrians launched their first shelling on July 1st, two days after President Sarkis had announced a new security plan which would recast the ADF as a support force for the Army and Internal Security Forces. The drama came in President Sarkis's threat to resign which placed him at the center of the international scene and offered possibilities for him to shake Lebanon loose from the petty local and regional politics that were sucking its marrow. But the dramatic moment slipped by and the bombardment of Chris-

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tian residential areas continued into October when the Security Council stepped in.

The dilemma of Lebanon is that no meaningful accord can be achieved without the consent of all the parties, but as long as all the parties remain in place there can be no accord. Everyone is necessary: the Syrians are necessary to prevent the war between Christians and the coalition of Palestinians and Leftists from erupting; President Sarkis is necessary because it would be impossible to maintain the facade of unity and legality without him; the Christian militias are necessary to prevent a full Syrian take-over of Lebanon, etc., etc. Everyone has solid reasons for trusting no one else. The promises, propositions and declarations form part of the game of charades the major parties to the conflict are playing while they wait for something to happen on the Middle East scene which will turn the balance in their favor.

The latest major presentation in the game was the Conference of Beit-al-Din in mid-October 1978. The Foreign Ministers of the Arab countries involved in the ADF met to arrange the Lebanese problem and clear the way for a national accord. The Saudis did manage to tone down Syrian arrogance for a time and the Saudi Ambassador to Lebanon was active in cooling off the flash points where Syrians were in contact with Christian militias—until he was shot in the leg flying over Christian territory and then brought under leftist fire while recuperating in the hospital. But for the rest, the Conference was content to repeat old decisions concerning Palestinian behavior and the role of the ADF, and to form a committee to help President Sarkis control the ADF. The Foreign Ministers did add a new note, in condemning all those who collaborate with Israel. This was directed at the army contingent and militia in the south which with Israeli help control the villages which ring the border with Israel, and was also a warning to Chamoun and Gemayel who receive arms from Israel. This Christian collaboration with Israel is a black mark in the mind of Arab governments and hinders them from putting more pressure on Syria. In any case, months after the Conference all parties are still demanding that certain of its recommendations be carried out. The hope put in Arab diplomatic pressure to solve the crisis has all but collapsed.

WITH THE SITUATION stymied within Lebanon, and with the apparent failure of Arab attempts to loosen the deadlock, the only other possible agency is international. But there too

LEBANON UPDATE

TWO DEVELOPMENTS, one military, the other political, have taken place in Lebanon since this article was written: an attempt to establish Lebanonese government military control in the south and a plan for improving internal Lebanese political conditions.

The attempt at military control of the south occurred against the background of Palestinian attacks against Israel and Israeli retaliatory bombings in Lebanon. Also in the background was the new defense law that the government adopted after four years of pressure to take authority over the Lebanese army away from the President and the commander-in-chief (both Christians) and transfer it to the prime minister (a Muslim) and a Defense Council. On April 17 a small contingent of the army (about 500 men) was ordered to move south to take up a position next to the UN command headquarters at Naqura, a Lebanese village on the coast near the Israeli border. Thus would the Lebanese government assume a symbolic sovereignty over the south.

As it headed south of the Litani river, this contingent was blocked by the forces of Major Haddad, the controversial leader of the Christian militia which has controlled the border zone along the Israeli line since the withdrawal of the Israeli troops in January 1978. Fighting between the two forces broke out. On April 18, Haddad's militia blockaded roads leading into the area and his guns shelled the UN post at Naqura. The same day Haddad declared this six-mile wide area to be an independent territory called Free Lebanon. Israeli support of Haddad in preventing the Lebanese army contingent from moving southward was protested by UN Secretary General Waldheim and denied by Prime Minister Begin. On April 26 the UN Security Council commended Lebanon for taking steps to assert its authority over the south.

Meanwhile the situation had been worsened when a Palestinian attack, on April 22, against the Israeli town of Nahariya provoked three days of Israeli gunboat shelling of targets in southern Lebanon, which forced 45,000 refugees to flee from the areas around the southern seaport of Tyre.

On the political front, President Sarkis had been working on a plan for national reconciliation. According to the *New York Times* (May 5), this plan called for UN forces to take over the areas occupied by Haddad's militia, for the Palestinian resistance operations from Lebanon against Israel to be halted, for the Syrian forces to withdraw from around the city of Beirut, and for a new government of politicians representing the various political groups in the country to replace the present government of technocrats, which had been in office since Prime Minister Selim al-Hoss took office two-and-a-half years ago. To win Syrian support for the plan, the Lebanese discussed it with Syrian Foreign Minister Abdul Halim Khaddam on his visit to Beirut the first week of May. Then President Sarkis went to Damascus for a summit on May 14-15 with President Hfiz al-Asad of Syria. On May 16, al-Hoss submitted his resignation, which was accepted. Reports that the Kata'ib party under Pierre Gemayel and the National Liberal party under Camille Chamoun would be united circulated even as fighting broke out between some members of these two parties.

JOSEPH L. RYAN

(Joseph L. Ryan, S.J., Rector of the Jesuit Community, Holy Cross College, lived in Beirut from 1971 to 1975.

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the facts have belied the hope. The United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) came into the south in March to assure the application of UN Security Council Resolution 425, namely evacuation of Israeli forces and the re-establishment of Lebanese sovereignty in the area. The Israelis did withdraw finally, leaving the border area in the hands of the "friendly" army detachment there and Christian and Shiite militias. But the problem is, who will assert Lebanese sovereignty in the south if, by chance, it is re-established? The Palestinians and National Movement militias control most of the area from the Litani river south, except for the points held by UNIFIL and the border villages controlled by the army and militias collaborating with Israel. If the Lebanese Army is sent to collaborate with or relieve the UNIFIL will they pass through Christian controlled areas or follow a route through Palestinian-held territory? (At one point it was proposed that the Army be flown in by helicopter to avoid this problem.) Will the Army go south to assert Lebanese sovereignty over the Palestinian Resistance, or to clear out the forces collaborating with Israel? It does not take much imagination to guess how the various parties line up on these questions.

The government would be content to put a merely symbolic force in the area which would in fact do nothing—but the various forces involved cannot even agree on a symbol. Meanwhile, the UN and its financing powers chafe at the inefficacy of the operation; the last renewal of the UNIFIL mandate, for 5 and not for 6 months, was a reminder to the Lebanese government.

And the powers? They remain committed to a united, integral, sovereign and independent Lebanon, and they stand fully behind legitimate authority as represented by President Sarkis. Obviously, it is not just the power groups in Lebanon who are playing charades. It is possible that Washington and Paris did put some pressure on Syria after the October shelling which was so savage that even Washington was embarrassed, but publicly, the U.S. and France have done everything possible to cultivate Syria, hoping to draw her into an overall settlement in the area. Neither appears ready to make any fuss over Lebanon which will most likely be sacrificed for an overall accord. French Foreign Minister De Guiringaud removed any doubts about the possibility when he publicly declared, on the eve of President Sarkis's visit to Paris in December, that the only reasonable solution to the Palestinian problem is that the 400,000 Palestinians in Lebanon be absorbed into the Lebanese population.

Anyone who can single out the forces of good and the powers of evil in the Lebanese embroglio is deluded or thoroughly partisan. The Christians, with very good reason, do not want to be absorbed into Syria and become the second-class population of a Muslim country. Sunni and Shiite Muslims would like to profit from the mess to get a fairer share of power. The Leftists want to clean out the political deadwood (especially in the Sunni community) and open the way to new and younger forces. The Palestinians want to be sure their "revolution" is not strangled before a Palestinian state is created—a solid base in Lebanon is their only assurance. And Syria wants at least indirect control of Lebanon and the Palestinians as a defense against Israel and as a means of dominating the Middle East which has been lacking a leader since the political death of Nasser in 1967.

The sudden romance of Syria and Iraq and the moderate tone of the Baghdad summit in December are signs that it is not only the forces in Lebanon that are waiting for some dramatic development in the area. Now, the Khomeini revolution in Iran introduces a new factor which is difficult to evaluate.

Meanwhile, if anyone is looking for culprits, the real ones do not appear on the scene. They are the various powers that are trying to solve the Middle East crisis while avoiding the basic problem—the Palestinians. In their attempt to bury the Palestinian problem in Lebanon, the powers have created the Lebanese.

Stage

DINNER MUSIC

TRAPPED BY SWEENEY TODD

"A WHIMSICAL TALE," Robert Benchley said of the 1924 revival of *Sweeney Todd*, "and told with considerable unction in the manner of plays of 1840." *Whimsical* may not be the exact word to describe the story of a homicidal barber whose victims become the chief ingredient of Mrs. Lovett's celebrated meat pies; and oiliness is a function of character rather than style in the newest *Sweeney Todd*, Stephen Sondheim's musical return to the Demon Barber of Fleet Street. At this distance, the unctuous whimsy that Benchley's review conjures tells us less about a particular revival than about the complex appeal that the grisly story has had for audiences since early in the nineteenth century. In an author's note in the program, Sondheim says that the original melodrama's "admirable objective was to stun its audiences with a holocaust of thrills, horrors and shocks." There is more to it than that. The intention alters, just as the plot does, from one version of *Sweeney Todd* to another, from play to penny dreadful, from novel to music hall song. Sometimes Todd is motivated by a desire for revenge, sometimes by simple greed; sometimes he is a madman, sometimes a villain. In some cases, the horror is laced with macabre humor; in others, by a compulsion to preach. Sondheim's *Sweeney* touches most of those bases and, surprisingly, comes across as a unified piece—a funny, scary tract for our time.

To begin with, there is the melodrama. Len Cariou, looking rather like the Sweeney Todd in the British Museum print borrowed by mid-century publishers, has shocks of hair jutting out from a head like a wood block, sitting on an even more blockish body. White-faced, menacing even in repose, he is almost a puppet scare figure, a calculated contrast to Ken Jennings's sweetly boyish Tobias, Sarah Rice's picturebook

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heroine, Victor Garber's sailor hero, a Jack Tar straight out of a period illustration. There are last-minute escapes, locked cellars, madhouse prisons, and so many cut throats that the final pile-up of death and madness seems as commonplace as disaster on the television news.

But it is never parody melodrama. The laughter and the horror go together, each reinforcing the other. In Captain Merry's *Sweeney Todd; or, The Ruffian Barber* (New York, 1853), Sweeney is given to lines like "there ain't a barber that ever thinks of polishing anybody off as I do" and innocent Tobias, long before he suspects anything, has a favorite oath to affirm his loyalty, "may I be made into one of Lovett's pies." A giggle and *frisson* in a single line because Merry's readers knew all about Sweeney Todd before the plot unfolded. Musical comedy needs more than double-entendre, as Sondheim knows; he mixes his comedy with character and plot. Cheerfully in "Kiss Me," the lovers' duet in which the effervescent Johanna flattens her sailor with words, for all the world like a musical Katherine Hepburn mowing down Cary Grant in *Bringing Up Baby*. More strategically in "The Worst Pies in London," which lets Mrs. Lovett set the scene—emotionally, economically—for the casual transition to the people pie business. Angela Lansbury's Mrs. Lovett, looking like a slightly demented doll, gets the splashiest numbers in the show—"A Little Priest," the duet with Sweeney in which they make playful jokes about the taste of the various professions, and "By the Sea," in which she conjures an idyllic retirement with a little recreational murder on the side. These songs have so much gaiety in them that they seduce the audience into complicity.

Sharing the laughter with the villains muddies the clean, old-fashioned melodrama line, but that line takes twists of its own, pulled off the straight and narrow by the social implications of the show. The immediate source of the musical is Christopher Bond's 1973 adaptation, which Sondheim calls "the most expert and the most unnerving" version of the play. I have neither seen nor read Bond's *Sweeney*, but on the evidence of Sondheim's musical I assume that he has drawn to it for qualities that transcend the frightening and the funny. There is conventional satire in "A Little Priest," which suggests that every man is unappetizing in his own way, but the central social point lies in the composer's having chosen to tell the Sweeney Todd story. His Sweeney is motivated by revenge for a heinous wrong done him by corrupt officials and, failing to kill his tormentors, he decided to get even with the whole world by cutting throats at random. His view of society voiced at the beginning of the show in "No Place Like London," is one that lets him embrace Mrs. Lovett's culinary suggestion as a perfect image of the way men live. "What keeps a man alive?" asks Mrs. Peachum in *The Threepenny Opera*, at least in Marc Blitzstein's Brechtian words: "He lives on others. He likes to taste them first, then eat them whole if he can." *The Threepenny Opera* springs to mind not simply because the story of Mrs. Lovett's pies is the perfect vehicle of a man-eats-man drama, but because there are echoes of Kurt Weill—in tone at least—all through the musical.

Sweeney Todd is no Brecht-Weill musical, however. It is diagnosis without cure. The musical opens with "The Ballad of Sweeney Todd," returns to it to bridge the segments of the story, uses it at the end. In flat, presentational delivery the "Ballad" seems at first a cautionary tale which the actors will perform. At the end, however, after the avalanche of melodramatic deaths, everything comes to a sudden halt. First one, then another performer picks up the "Ballad." The dead, the red marks of their cut throats plainly visible, join in. At this point, for me, the musical becomes genuinely scary. The "Ballad" is not cautionary after all; it is accusatory. Sweeney, the last character on stage, moves through the long pause after "Fleet" and on "Street," a snarl, he glares at the audience and makes a door-slam exit. I find myself remembering an earlier, shivery moment when Angela Lansbury, her voice full of sweetness and threat, reprises Tobias's "Not While I'm Around," lines that promise protection but offer death. What kind of world is it that lets me, knowing the possibilities in that voice, still frolic with Mrs. Lovett "By the Sea"? Sondheim's musical has point not because it punctures corrupt officials, nor because it uses its elaborate set to suggest some connection between industrialism and inhumanity, nor even because it presents a cannibalistic society. It works more directly. It lures the audience into the theater with the promise of merry mayhem and, then, in the final delivery of the "Ballad" accuses the audience for having risen to the bait.

Philosophically, I may question the world of *Sweeney Todd*, I may deny the truth of the mirror the musical holds before me, but Sondheim—clever man that he is, artist that he is—caught me in his trap. I swear he did, or may I be made into one of Lovett's pies.

GERALD WEALES

Screen

STUDIO STUDIES

INVENTING THE 'FILM NOIR'

FOR THE last few years the Museum of Modern Art has been doing retrospectives of the films of different studios, the most recent being "Rediscovering RKO." Over a period of five months the museum presented 135 films made at that studio from 1928 through 1958, when RKO ceased production. This was the best of the studio cycles done so far. I don't mean that the films were necessarily the best. On the contrary, the Film Department's Adrienne Mancia and Larry Kardish, who selected the programs, purposely chose some clunkers because they wanted the showing to be representative. That's why we got a rare opportunity to see, for instance, *Cimmaron* (1931) starring Richard Dix, a film Andrew Sarris once described as the worst ever to win an Academy Award. Still, it was worthwhile to see *Cimmaron* again because a museum retrospective ought to do more than

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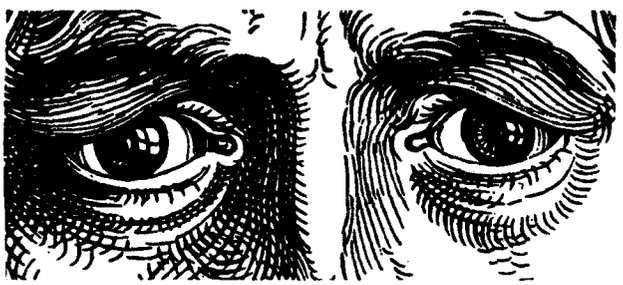
just show good movies: it ought to be educational. By going to a dozen of these RKO pictures you could gain more insight into the history of Hollywood than you could by reading ten dozen books on the subject.

And the truth is that you didn't have to sit through many bad movies to get this education, especially if you stuck to the films made in the late '40s and early '50s. In fact, it is surprising how consistent in style, and therefore good, RKO's productions turn out to be during this period. It's surprising because RKO never had the sort of strong management that was capable of envisioning a unified style and imposing it on a studio's work. In the decade just after the war, administration at RKO was even more chaotic than usual. That's when Howard Hughes's takeover of the studio ended Dore Schary's stint as head of production. The result was so much infighting in the front office that no one was really minding the shop a lot of the time. Other major studios had their distinctive "look." The most opulent was MGM's, which had been created originally by Irving Thalberg (in conjunction with art director Cedric Gibbons) and which would continue under the peripatetic Mr.



Schary upon his return from RKO in 1948. Warner Brothers also had its identifiable style—a less expensive one with a faster pace that has recently been parodied in *Movie, Movie*. But it is surprising to find a shared vision at RKO, where production values were not being coherently defined and enforced from above. This suggests that there was some sort of *Zeitgeist* in Hollywood at the time, some common point of view among filmmakers that was creating the new style.

This style which comes through so forcefully on a certain level at RKO is the one which the French would later call *"le film noir."* It is sometimes spoken of as if it were a genre restricted, like the Western, to a specific time, setting and costume. But *film noir* might more accurately be thought of as a particular way of visualizing a film—any film. It depends upon low, heavily manipulated lighting and stunning, baroque effects. It is a menacing atmosphere that made its appearance at one time or another in almost all genres. It can be found in Westerns, for example, as is apparent from RKO's *Blood on the Moon* (1948), where director of photography Nicholas Musuraca used infra-red film stock to create dark, lowering skies as a background for key scenes. Or it can turn up in a period film like Anthony Mann's *Reign of Terror* (1949), also made, as I recall, at RKO. Even the RKO musical *The Sky's the Limit* (1943) shows the influence of *film noir*, as does a social-consciousness film about rape, *Outrage* (1950), that was one of several films directed at the studio by Ida Lupino.

This style grew out of the Teutonic epics and Gothic romances made in Germany during the Expressionist period of the 1920s. Some traces of pure Expressionism were still to be found at RKO, particularly in the dream sequences of Boris Ingster's *The Stranger on the Third Floor* (1940), in which a man imagines himself wrongly convicted of a murder, and of course in Orson Welles's *Citizen Kane* (1941). Both these films create a sense of vast, desolate space—a kind of visual metaphor for spiritual emptiness—found in the German originals. But already in *Citizen Kane*, this Expressionism which had immigrated to America with refugee directors and cameramen in the 1930s was beginning to be naturalized. Around this time Alfred Hitchcock also emigrated to America. His first film here, *Rebecca*, (1940), is set at a forbidding English country house which burns to the ground in the true Gothic tradition. But in his next film, *Suspicion* (1941), Hitchcock moved a similar heroine (again played by Joan Fontaine) out of a similar Gothic pile and into a light, comfortable, modern house. Something about coming to America had made Hitchcock realize that the commonplace and everyday can ultimately be more terrifying than what is bizarre and exotic. It was a realization he would pursue until he arrived two decades later at the blandest, most colorless American setting imaginable, a motel bathroom.

The moment when this realization is driven home in *Suspicion* is done with all the touches that were to become typical of *film noir*. As Cary Grant brings a glass of milk up to Joan Fontaine in bed, the staircase is engulfed in Expressionist shadows—in heavy, black bars of darkness that fall across the scene at crazy angles. And the milk itself, having been spiked with our suspicions that Grant is about to poison Fontaine, literally glows in the dark (actually, there was a light bulb inside the glass). The ominousness of ordinary things in this scene is prophetic for American movies in general. Yet as striking as Hitchcock's insight was at this moment, it was not unique. The year after *Suspicion*, RKO producer Val Lewton came out with *Cat People*, the first of a series of films he did transforming the whole convention of the horror film by placing it in ordinary, familiar settings. Indeed, at RKO alone so many directors were beginning to work in this way that it's impossible to single out any one and say he was the leader. While this new style was seen in the films of every genre, however, it did tend in the end to attach itself to one particular kind of story and setting. It became *the* style for murder mysteries, *policiers*, private-eye movies and thrillers—for contemporary stories about middle-class characters who had gotten into a scrape with the law or were, as they say, "mixed up with" hoodlums.

This was the mode in which the vast majority of RKO's postwar films were made, as the retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art demonstrated. This is also the reason why a surprising number of these inexpensive films represent the Hollywood movie at its best. The period right after the war at RKO was one of the studio system's finest hours. It was that bright flash of light which a meteor gives off just before it burns up and disappears. *(The first of two parts.)*

COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

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Disco decadents, punk poseurs

GERRY O'SULLIVAN

THE CHRYSLER Corporation has seen fit to provide my car with an AM radio which I instinctively turn on the moment the key clicks in the ignition. Each morning as I drive to and from classes, I deftly exercise my fingers on the selector buttons, trying desperately to avoid an endless barrage of tunes with titles containing such amazing examples of Newspeak as "boogie," "get-down" and "freak-out." These phrases are constantly repeated to unrelenting loops of simplistic snare beats accompanied by the high-pitched shrieking of apparently overjoyed background singers. In the midst of the din, there is normally one (usually untalented) lead vocalist, seemingly in mid-orgasm, cajoling an unseen audience to "dance, dance, dance," "boogie, oogie, oogie" or "shake their booties."

They call it disco. It all began a few years back with a rather innocuous little tune entitled "The Hustle," written by a relative unknown named Van McCoy. Suddenly, like a bolt out of the blue, everyone was doing the hustle in countless variations and mutations—Latin hustle, New York hustle, tango hustle, *ad nauseam*. Hardline rockers sweated out the phenomenon until what appeared to be a peak and sudden decline, but this lasted just long enough for a movie called *Saturday Night Fever* to be filmed and released. Disco returned, but now with cultural reinforcements. Discos overflowed with John Travolta/Tony Manero look-alikes. Print Qiana shirts and tight-fitting polyesters became all the rage, and sparkling white Monte Carlos and Cutlass Supremes flocked like so many chromium sheep around newly opened neighborhood discos. Even super-staid Mike Douglas, the overlord of afternoon sweet talk, began featuring disco groups, fashion shows and owners on his peculiarly middle-American program. The best became inescapable. It poured out of record stores, car radios and massive two-speaker portables carried by kids onto trains and buses. WKTU, once a rather snobbish mellow-rock station in New York, did an overnight switch to an all-disco format and subjected motorists to their new "DISCO 92" logo emblazoned in amphetamine-shriek

day-glo yellow across buses city-wide. The word was out—disco was in, and nobody could stop it.

In the midst of an army of Bowery winos, junkies and lunatics, inconspicuously hidden in the darkness off Bleecker Street, sits a rather dingy-looking little club called CBGB's. On any given night, hordes of outrageously attired people pack themselves into the tiny cafe to hear groups with names like "The Fleshtones," "Tuff Darts," "Suicide," and "Richard Hell and The Voidoids" pump infantile three-chord earthquakes through cheap amps. Through the darkness of the interior, decorated in Early American accident, one pans across a milieu of faces beneath brightly dyed, maniacally-cropped hairdos, faces that scream out curses and counterthreats at the performers, drool beer and grimace madly into space. Evening wear consists of haphazard combinations of torn T-shirts, chains, safety pins, rubber and leather, and is displayed on the backs of blank-staring exhibitionists who mockingly menace one another at the bar and in the hog-stall deco bathrooms.

What began in New York in the late '60s and early '70s as a reactionary movement in rock, typified by Lou Reed's Velvet Underground and David Johansen's New York Dolls, steadily degenerated into minimalism and finally slipped into the throes of nihilism, leaving only a dismal shell surrounded by an aura of senseless violence and a general disdain for life as a whole. Those with an artistic sense left turned to the neo-progressive "new wave," represented by groups like Talking Heads, Blondie and Television, and by individuals like Elvis Costello who, wary of punk-identification, retreated away from the movement, leaving an even wider gap. If disco is the illegitimate child of rock 'n' roll, punk is its miscarriage.

The fringe element inherent in both punk rock and disco has resulted in a certain disdain for the two movements on the part of those interested in progressive rock, a general movement in contemporary music towards new and creative modes of expression. The "progressive" mentality is epitomized by such groups as Emerson, Lake and Palmer, who've sought forward motion based upon classical composers ranging from Bach to Copland. Those people interested in preserving the versatility of progressive rock fear that disco/punk factionalism has only proved abortive to all attempts at furthering rock as a potential, truly legitimate art form. Another of progressive rock's premier and pioneering groups, Yes, evoked a mass-chorus of boos on their latest tour from a capacity crowd at Madison Square Garden when lead vocalist Jon Anderson jokingly introduced the group's classic piece, "Roundabout," as a special encore "for all the disco people in the audience."

Frank Zappa's "Disco Boy" ("Leave his hair alone/but you can kiss his

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comb''), as well as the Tubes' ''Slipped My Disco'' have taken on anthem-status with rock hardliners. The claims made by disco and punk devotees to the effect that their music is some kind of logical outcome or pinnacle of what rock has always attempted to be but never could also give rise to feelings of ambivalence towards their modes of music. This neo-dialectical mentality holds that the only route left open to the progress of modern music is through either of the two outgrowths, and not independent of their glorious influences. This ''be-all and end-all'' thinking is opposed by those who are constantly seeking out new formulas and approaches to artistic expression in rock music; those who see the stifling nature of any art form (or, should I say, attempted art form) which sets inescapable parameters for style, content and means of approach.

ALL ART, as we know, is symbolic. Carl Jung, the father of analytical psychology, felt man's overall history to be one of a search for new and better symbols, symbols which could stand as truly representative of the totality of human nature. Jung feared the sterility and one-sidedness of modern symbols, which he felt to be representative of mass-materialism. The 1960s saw an age of rebellion against such material excesses, but too often produced excesses of its own.

The music and musicians of the sixties wallowed (and often drowned) in a pool of mad-dash libertarianism. But out of the same mire that produced Woodstock, Alice Cooper and Jimi Hendrix came songwriters who sought to rally the youthful audiences around generally positive symbols of love, peace, compassion and a respect for nature. Images such as singer-songwriter Donovan's ''Universal Soldier'' and Phil Ochs's figure of the heroic martyr in his song ''Crucifixion'' called listeners to self-examination and a sense of social action. When a so-called ''peace'' was established in Vietnam, when ''the movement'' lost its leaders to the establishment and the ''good guys'' and ''bad guys'' were no longer easily distinguished by long hair and gray suits, the once-important symbology of the era lost its force and mass-appeal. The peace symbol was no longer a banner beneath which students rallied to demand an end to the mass-slaughters occurring in the jungles of Southeast Asia. It was now merely an inverted trident enclosed within a circle, seen occasionally scrawled in subways and on park benches alongside new all-purpose words like ''peace'' and ''love.''

Watergate only served to further generalize distrust. The greatest living symbol America had, the office of the presidency, had been betrayed by a man who had gained overwhelming support in his reelection. What followed was a tide of political and social apathy, a ''so what?'' trend in American thought which has led us to a frightening sense of mass-solipsism. Indeed, the '70s are characterized by the ominous label of ''the me decade,'' a label which aptly signifies the ''survival of the fittest'' mentality which has pervaded business, art and politics over the last few years.

When the ''old symbols'' and ''old values'' died, a tremendous gap was left. Individuals floundered about, making crazed grasps after new forms of expression, clawing about in the rubble for something to cling to. American society was in the throes of what Gabriel Marcel termed the ''fanaticized consciousness,'' a consciousness which, devoid of meaning, seeks out meaning wherever it can be found. Faddism reached new heights, sweeping across America in rising and lowering tides of consumer madness. Disco and punk grew out of this madness, offering individuals new value centers, new ''places to go,'' and presented not only new trends in music but in fashion and attitude as well, an attitude compatible with the egocentricity of the ''me decade.''

In the case of disco, ''meaning'' became an effectively saleable commodity. The electric guitar, once wielded like an axe by rebellious anti-establishment types, became domesticated by the cash-register. The nation's Tony Maneros spend fortunes on tools of vanity—hair styles, blow-dryers, gold neck-chains, polyester three-piece suits and massive, gleaming, gas-guzzling automobiles. Disco, indeed, has become a boon to the economy as well as an effective means of safely channeling human need and emotion into the pockets of big business. A while back, David Susskind devoted an entire show to interviewing a group of regular disco-goers who stressed the importance of spending one's Saturday afternoons polishing the car and preening the hair in preparation of the ''big night.'' What, queried Susskind, was the underlying purpose behind the cool, the car and the cologne? The panel unanimously agreed that their only real purpose for participating in the weekly disco-ritual was sexual—they sought only to pick-up or get picked-up. When asked if anything else really mattered to them, they unflinchingly said ''no.''

Everything about disco is sexual—the lyrics pound the message into the mind and the style of dress serves the same purpose, like plumage. But the sexuality of disco is not a personal sexuality. It is a consumerist, pre-packaged, domineering sexuality devoid of feeling or intensity, tamed by the clothing and cosmetics industries to heighten sales. John Travolta is simply the Freudian primal father reborn amidst an industrial horde—he's got all the macho, all the women, and he's worshipped through emulation, but in the end he is psychologically slain by the realization that his life is shallow, worthless and without meaning.

If disco is representative of the effective exploitation of human sexuality to commercial and self-serving ends, punk is the stance of the individual who not only refuses to ''play the game,'' but seeks to obliterate it and himself as well. Punk builds its musical and philosophical foundations upon active nihilism, on what Albert Camus referred to as ''absolute negation.'' In *The Rebel*, Camus wrote that ''nihilism confounds creator and created in the same blind fury,'' and no statement could be truer in describing punk rock. The aggressive excesses of the punk-mentality, characterized by songs such as the Ramones' ''Beat the Brat'' and fashion habits such as cropping the hair, wearing chains and razor blades and the use of broken bottles by performers to lacerate chests and arms,

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shows that the senseless lashing-out of devoted "punks" is not only external, but self-destructive as well.

Most punks, however, are only *poseurs*. Their sense of violence is that of the cornered, frightened animal. It is an empty, passionless aggression vented in dark cafes. Like T.S. Eliot's "Hollow Men," they indulge in "paralysed force, gesture without motion." The opulence of disco's Studio 54 and the decadence of punk's CBGB's tends to remind one of a very similar historical phenomenon, namely the rise of German cabaret depravity before the Hitler years and the outbreak of World War II. Could it be that we in the "Happy Seventies" are gliding merrily and blindly into the jaws of a national crisis? Keep dancing, America. Turn the volume up to ten and sit back. (Who wants to hear that, just a few months back, 911 United States citizens took their own lives in the jungles of Guyana, all for one individual who simply "offered them something more"?) Who cares about political and social apathy, corporate corruption, and the dissolution of family life? When you've got Saturday Night Fever, why worry about the Sunday Morning Migraine?

Books: BEING & THE WILL TO PRAYER

THE ILLUSION OF TECHNIQUE:
A SEARCH FOR MEANING IN A TECHNOLOGICAL CIVILIZATION

William Barrett

Doubleday, $12.95, 359 pp.

Louis Dupré

A WELL-WRITTEN book in philosophy has become a rare surprise. William Barrett's thoughtful reflection upon our technological age, couched in a literate, highly personal style, harks back to the happy days when James, Royce, Hocking and Santayana were shaping the thought as well as the language of their generation. What Barrett modestly announces as "a sketch toward a history of philosophy in our century" presents, in fact, a critical interpretation of the cultural drift of our age in the light of its major philosophies. Wittgenstein, Heidegger and James provide the interpretative structure, but the message is very much the author's own.

With an assurance and perceptiveness acquired by long and thorough acquaintance Barrett pursues the ideas of three leading thinkers of our time to their final, unproven assumptions, their ultimate prephilosophical intuitions, and then moves beyond. Such a method takes time and the reader has completed nearly one-third of the book before he realizes that he is dealing with more than yet another analysis and critique of Wittgenstein. But the result justifies the deliberate pace. Impatient critics who find no time for the distant and often indirect analyses of their great predecessors usually end up paying for their haste. Reflection also has a history, and that history has become an integral part of the culture on which we reflect. This is particularly true on the subject of technology. Without a solid understanding of the philosophical origins of the modern concept of science and of its philosophical revisions the critique remains almost inevitably within the perimeters of technological thought.

With Wittgenstein technological thought attained its ultimate consistency before breaking down altogether as a philosophical world model. In his early *Tractatus* he culminates the attempt initiated by Galileo and Descartes to convert thinking itself into a technique for controlling the world. The first requirement had been to isolate an objective realm from all subjective involvement and then to subject it to logical procedures of analysis and new syntheses. The young Wittgenstein experienced no doubt about the possibility of discovering a universal, strictly logical language for all that man can legitimately talk about. In his early days with Russell at Oxford, nothing appeared clearer than that logical atomism, the divisibility of complex meanings into simple, unrelated units, held the key to the understanding of the world. The remaining question was: How must we conceive of the world in order to make it accessible to this logical apparatus? Wittgenstein has given us his answer in the *Tractatus Logico-Mathematicus*—a book as notorious for what it omits as for what it includes. Yet soon he lost faith in the meaningfulness of a logic that could accommodate none of the questions that mattered most to him. ("From the start, Wittgenstein seems to have been that rare phenomenon among human beings—a genuinely religious personality.") With characteristic honesty he withdrew from the philosophical enterprise altogether and when he returned, years later, he was a changed man.

Even with his later, pluralistic theory of language Wittgenstein was unable to lift his thinking out of its positivist tracks and most of his followers continued to work stolidly within the narrow confines of his early program. What was missing here? That all explication must take place *within* language brooks no doubt. But that fact itself needs to be justified and such a justification, in the end, must be done in the light of Being itself. How must Being be understood to allow communication *within* language? How can Being be permanent and yet be revealed in a language that remembers the past and anticipates the future but only speaks in the present? Clearly, those are not questions of logical method and any attempt to answer them in terms of a *technique* of thinking must miss their point altogether.

When we reduce the cosmos to a purely objective realm open to technical manipulation and we replace the will to let be by the naked will to power, we

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deprive human subjectivity of its very substance. Some have declared our age objectivist and devoid of inner life. Others speak of the triumph of subjectivity, or of the cult of power. In the end the two evaluations confirm one another. Once the intrinsic bond between the subject and its world has been severed, the cultural pendulum is bound to swing from soulless objectivism to vaporous or destructive subjectivism. In revealing this process of detachment as it developed through Western history Heidegger, the philosopher of Being, became the principal critic of our age and of its truth "by conquest and rape."

Needed is a return of freedom to Being, the will to let Being be. Such a return constitutes no project of moral action for Heidegger; it is exclusively a matter of *Gelassenheit*, of surrendering resignation. But does resignation suffice to an age that has become trammeled in its own freedom? Certainly the surrender to Being requires more than an aesthetic-religious return to nature. After all, true surrender is itself the fruit of the moral will—but of this Heidegger remains silent. Barrett concludes laconically: "His conception of freedom is detached from the will to action."

In a time of urgent need the message of William James, that buoyant advocate of the moral will, may well be of greater avail than Heidegger's pessimistic critique of our present culture. However, James's moral will is far more than ethical determination; it is, above all, an act of faith, a profession of trust in the universe that can be completed only in religious surrender. Has James himself grasped the full extent of what he proposed? The faith that is needed cannot be commanded by sheer resolve. Religious surrender springs not from a "will to believe," but from a Godgiven faith enabling the believer to will. This concept of will has vanished from contemporary thought, yet no other will allow us to escape our cultural predicament. "Perhaps we have to reach back . . . to an older meaning of the will: to the meaning that *voluntas* had for some medieval philosophers, which goes back to St. Augustine and beyond him to the *Eros* of Plato. Perhaps the will, at its deepest, does not connote self-assertion and dominance, but love and acquiescence; not the will to power, but the will to prayer".

The *voluntas obedientialis* uniquely balances activity and passivity. It is first and foremost acceptance, grace. This clearly appears in the mystical life, but mysticism, Barrett rightly maintains, constitutes the core of all religion. That James, despite his life-long, serious interest, could not feel enough empathy with that mystical world to be able to understand it as part of the real world, casts some reflection upon his understanding of religion as a whole. Faith has never found a friendlier observer than William James. But one who always remained outside. Pascal presented as a wager what was real faith; James reduced faith to a real wager. To him the act of faith must intrinsically verify the most vital and attractive life hypothesis. Yet the believer does not bank on some promising hypothesis. He does not exactly know *what* he believes; he does not even know for sure *that* he believes. "The statement 'I believe' can only be uttered as a prayer."

Barrett, as the true believer he is, knows the difference. To him the only conversion that will liberate modern man requires a faith that possesses the passive surrender of Heidegger's *Gelassenheit*, as well as the moral fiber needed to *accept* the grace of faith actively and often with difficulty. Such a faith constitutes at once the primary prayer and the ultimate resolve. "We cannot will back a faith that has been lost. We shall have to live back into that way of being in whose ambience the religious once drew breath." Only through the adoption of an actively passive attitude can we hope to overcome the age-old schizophrenia of our culture and to regain a new sense of Being.

> *We think of the mystic as one who has entry to some special sphere of reality, and brings us back bulletins of information from there. We ordinary mortals do not have access to that special world, but out of democratic tolerance we cannot reject the mystic's reports of it out of hand. He may be telling the truth, for all we know. Still, since these reports come from such a different world, they do not affect our life here, and we can go about our concerns as if mystic and mysticism never existed . . . But this mentality is precisely what is likely to miss the whole point about mysticism. The mystic is not a purveyor of new information at all. Why should he seek to multiply the items of the Many for a people who have lost sight of the One? He does not bring forward any new beliefs about particular occult matters of fact. He is simply a witness to Being, and its mystery, within which he seeks continuously to stand . . .*
>
> *Indeed, there may be no more important task for our culture than to rediscover the sense of the mystics.*
>
> —The Illusion of Technique

Sexuality, autonomy and God

SEXUAL MORALITY:
A CATHOLIC PERSPECTIVE

Philip S. Keane, S.S.

Paulist Press, $8.50, 236 pp.

Eugene Fontinell

I MUST confess that I approached this book with minimal expectations and undoubtedly a few prejudices. The opening pages did little to raise my expectations or challenge my prejudices. Father Keane would, of course, concede past church peccadillos: the Christian tradition had not always "argued from its central teachings to the goodness of human sexuality as clearly as it might have;" the "Roman Catholic tradition on human sexuality is impoverished because of certain historical distortions." We are going to be shown, however, that this tradition is "a living tradition, ever open to better expression." Further, while Keane will reject the physicalist emphasis of the tradition in favor of a

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more modern wholistic and relational approach, lo and behold the answers he will "give to specific questions of sexual morality will be, in general, fairly similar to those given in the Christian tradition of the past. But the whole spirit behind the answers will be different. . . ."

Surely I had heard ths song before—a slightly different tempo, perhaps, but the same words and music. The church has always been right in the essentials while occasionally falling short (for complex historical reasons) in the accidentals. But I was wrong. Though Keane does not completely escape such a posture, what he does retain of it is honestly qualified and free from any self-satisfaction. The "spirit" does give life and often a different life—in this case a much different life, perhaps, than the author fully realizes.

Central to Keane's method is the ontic/moral distinction. All human actions have an element of ontic evil insofar as they exclude some good. Keane's concern is with what he calls "morally significant ontic evils," by which he means "that the evil is weighty and that the human person has some freedom relative to the evil." To say that an act is ontically evil is not to say that it is necessarily morally evil. Keane criticizes traditional moral theology for its "physicalism" which he wishes to supplant with a more "wholistic" approach. If we are to determine whether an ontically evil act is also morally evil, "we must look not to the action alone, but to the action in its total context." Employing "proportionate reason, based on the total concreteness of the action," Keane is led to reject the traditional view that non-marital venereal pleasure is always objectively morally evil. Thus, while admitting that all venereal pleasure outside of marriage is significantly ontically evil, it is necessary to evaluate each act in terms of the totality of its factors. Using this approach, Keane concludes that masturbation is frequently morally justified, homosexuality often, premarital sex rarely and extra-marital sex almost never.

Keane is quite properly concerned to reject as an implication of his stress upon the total context of moral acts the conclusion that "anything goes." While it is arguable as to whether the only way to avoid this conclusion is by affirming absolutes, the more important aspect of Keane's effort is that he succeeds in avoiding that absolutistic mentality which usually accompanies such affirmation. Whether or not one agrees with or is persuaded by the particular positions at which he has arrived, there is no question that he has reached them on the basis of reflection and experiential sensitivity.

There is one aspect of Keane's moral theology which needs fuller development and one which needs radical revision: The first is his notion of individual responsibility and the second is his doctrine of God. Keane notes that Roman Catholic morality has held for centuries that the individual conscience is ultimately responsible for moral decisions. He, of course, rejects the "mistaken impression that conscience is completely autonomous" but he also denies "that conscience is simply a computer-like ratification of what the church teaches." My criticism is that Keane does not accept the full implication of this view. For example, in his treatment of pre-marital sex, which he argues is not always a moral evil, he is quick to add, however, that this is so only in rare cases and the danger is that "all sorts of people will conclude that their case is one of the rare cases." The implication here is that while most of us are constrained by general norms, there are a few who are exempt due to a special set of circumstances. I would contend that this conclusion cannot be reconciled with the relational concreteness which Keane has placed at the center of his methodology. Once we accept the individual as the final (though not sole) determinant of his moral life then norms, values, church directives and the like can never be more than factors which the reflective person must carefully weigh in reaching his or her decision. In a very real sense, then, we are all exceptions. The great error which the church has made has been to portray such autonomy as an easy surrender to selfish desires. I would argue that individual autonomy, properly qual-

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ified, is a more, not less, rigorous ideal and that it involves more, not less, pain, and sacrifice.

Development of a doctrine of human autonomy along the lines I am suggesting inevitably leads to a reconsideration of our understanding of God. According to Keane, we are "called into a loving personal relationship with God" and sin is the breaking of this relationship. Now, attractive as this is, its real significance depends upon just how we understand the divine-human relationship. One gets the impression that Keane's God is the traditional eternally unchanging, all-powerful and all-knowing God. Hence, as regards human moral actions, this God knows exactly what should be done in every instance and our task is to find out what God knows. Keane acknowledges the difficulty of this task and admits that often we can achieve knowledge of what God wants only through the "discernment of spirits."

I do not wish to trivialize what is obviously a long-standing doctrine, but it must be explained more fully than Keane has done if it is to avoid giving offense. Granted that such expressions as "God speaks" or "God calls" are metaphorical, still they must be used with more caution and qualification to avoid portraying God as an inarticulate message-sender. Out of compassion and experience, Keane wishes to avoid the older view that God has clearly revealed how we are to live and that only human perversity prevents us from recognizing this revelation. Paradoxically, in Keane's effort to be more sympathetic to the human plight, he runs the risk of presenting us with a more repugnant image of God. What kind of "loving God" is it who, possessing information vital to human lives, withholds it or releases it only consequent upon prayers and sacrifices?

There are, of course, respectable and reasonable responses to such a question which safeguard our traditional idea of God. But if we would recognize that this idea of God, is, after all, *our* idea, we might be less inclined to save it at all costs, particularly since it is in such conflict with so many crucial features of our experience. Keane sensitively describes a human situation characterized by complexity, change, novelty and pain, yet he seems to be content with a rather antiseptic God untouched by these features of reality. All "God language" is, of course, profoundly inadequate. Still it might not be presumptuous to suggest that it would be more congenial to the spirit of Keane's undertaking if he would think of human morality not as a slavish carrying-out of the eternal unchangeable orders of a divine potentate, but as the sharing in the creative life of a loving creator who invites us to struggle *with* him to bring forth a *new* world richer in realization and possibility.

From the ribald to the bureaucratic

CAPTAIN PANTOJA AND THE SPECIAL SERVICE

Mario Vargas Llosa
Harper & Row, $10.95, 288 pp.

Gene Bell-Villada

WITH frustrated soldiers going sexually amok in Amazon outposts, and civilian fathers and husbands up in arms about this lewd misconduct, the Peruvian top brass appoint loyal career administrator Capt. Pantaleón Pantoja to solve the problem. And solve it he does—too well and none too wisely. In the heat of the tropical rainforest, covert in mufti, with his mother, wife and new-born daughter housed away in civilian secrecy, a diligent Pantoja quietly launches the "Special Service for Garrisons, Frontier and Related Installations (SSGFRI)." This mouthful of officialese denotes what will become a vast network of mobile brothels, staffed by experienced dames who gladly trade in the rigors of night life for regimentation, steady pay, Sundays off and other such perks, while the Special Service, armed with surveys, accountants, a river boat, a hydroplane, a colorful flag and even a bouncy hymn (sung to the "Mexican Hat Dance"), soars to dizzying success, becomes the Peruvian military's most efficient single organism. Unfortunately, "Pantiland" (as folks call it) becomes the talk of the jungle towns, aspired to by streetwalkers, envied by wanton citizens, and excoriated in the florid broadcasts of a slick radio demagogue named "Sinchi." As if this weren't enough, a formerly passionless Panta (the Captain's nickname) falls for and shacks up with a luscious "Specialist," the plum *fatale* of all the prostitutes who goes by the sobriquet of *La Brasileña*.

These ticking time bombs go off all at once. When his Brazilian amour is shot dead in a skirmish with some sex-pirates, Panta aggravates things by having her buried with military honors and pronouncing—in uniform—a deeply-felt funeral eulogy, praising her as a soldier fallen in action. The scandal sheets have a heyday; Panta, now a national celebrity, is pressured for resignation by the big generals—but Pantaleón, every inch an army man, hopelessly attached to hierarchy, can't even imagine running his own shop. And so a reproved and demoralized Captain Pantoja is reassigned to the distant Andes where—amid the cold and the vicuñas—he will no doubt do as thorough a job as quartermaster as he had done as brothelkeeper.

Seem raunchy? And yet, with his masterful technique and his fascinating protagonist, Vargas Llosa pulls it off with high artistry. Capt. Pantoja is your classic organization man—loyal to the team and to authority, obsessed with order and work, zealous to a fault. Acclaimed by all as an administrative genius, he falls as a result of his own bland innocence, his incapacity to distinguish between what might or might not be deemed legitimate administrative material. Strangely naive, even saintly (his pre-Special Service record was absolutely perfect), the Captain duly stands up for his subordinates—hookers included. His graveside oration to the Brazilian—a speech conceived, he later insists to the generals, as a pep-talk, a needed spur to low morale within the Special Service—is eloquent and moving, yet ridiculous given the circumstances, while his earnest plea about motivating team spirit and group effi-

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ciency leaves his superiors quite dumfounded. A typically humorless bureaucrat oblivious to the humor of his role, in the end Pantaleón appears more complex, a kind of foolish hero or tragic fool.

Though easy and amusing from page to page, *Captain Pantoja* is no pop-realist puff job—no "straight" third- or first-person narratives here. The entire story is told through an artful combination of dry military dispatches, juicy personal letters, verbose radio rhetoric, and lurid sensationalist news reports (with campy headlines about "BLOOD, PASSION AND BASE INSTINCTS"). For those doomsayers who proclaim the death of the Novel, Vargas Llosa further develops his own third-person device—the intermixing of dialogue from totally different situations, times and places, with action and description placed not around the talking but rather fitted into those old cracks, the "he said-she said" portions. A random example:

> "I hate you . . . Why don't you . . . please me?" Pochita throws a pillow at him. "Panta, don't talk like a Chink."
>
> "I'm just happy, girl . . ." Panta is opening and closing his arms, squatting and jumping. "I never thought I'd get ahead with the mission the Army gave me."

Some of those in-between descriptions eventually become full-length paragraphs that summarize entire scenes—Vargas Llosa thereby turning novelistic procedure literally inside-out.

Currently the president of P.E.N. International, Mario Vargas Llosa is a Peruvian cosmopolite who has lived in London, Paris, Barcelona, San Juan and also the U.S. Together with (among others) García Márquez, Cortázar and Puig, he is one of a generation of Latin American novelists now garnering critical kudos throughout the New World and the Old. A younger Vargas Llosa was catapulted to notoriety when, back in Lima, some 1000 copies of *Time of the Hero*—his first novel, set in a military academy he had once attended—were burned in public ceremony at that very school. His panoramic masterpiece, *Conversation in the Cathedral* (the latter is not a temple but a bar where the basic action unfolds) sweeps through all manner of social rot in the Peruvian 1950s. Complementing his career as novelist of Peru's armed forces, Vargas Llosa recently spoke out against the ruling military regime, criticizing its huge arms purchases, its closing down of opposition media, its tendency to whip up anti-foreign sentiment (see *New York Times*, February 15). Vargas Llosa has even warned against the danger of war with Chile—not a remote eventuality, given the highly-charged, militarized atmosphere now hanging over the reactionary Southern Cone.

As in the author's earlier books, *Captain Pantoja* sniffs out corruption in high places, but it also presents something of a break, Vargas Llosa here shedding his high seriousness and adopting a humorous, ribald tone. The plot is funny enough, but the real laughs come from Vargas Llosa's variegated linguistic registers—ranging from the earthily colloquial to the deadpan-bureaucratic. Here we see "undersigned" colonels coolly tabulating the sex needs of buck privates, and soldiers' payments for achieved "aspirations" (marvelous euphemism) being entered into ledger books under the guise of laundry expenses (laundered money, literally). After reading *Special Service*, that Pentagonese term "Specialist" seems oddly jocose. The translation into contemporary American by Christ and Kolovakos is first-rate—one of the better renderings of modern South American prose fiction.

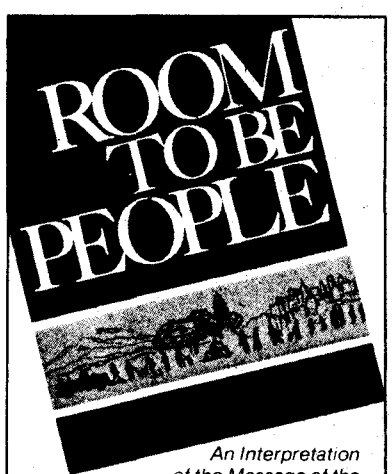
Brecht on stage

BRECHT:
A BIOGRAPHY
Klaus Völker
Translated by John Nowell
Seabury, $14.95, 412 pp.

Wallace Fowlie

THE AUTHOR of this biography, Mr. Klaus Völker, is co-editor of the complete works of Bertolt Brecht, and has served as a director of plays in Germany and Switzerland. To the writing of this study he has brought a German's knowledge of his own country and its political upheavals from the time of World War I to the post-World War II years. The book is a complete account of the playwright's life, beginning with his student days in Augsburg and Munich (somewhat reminiscent of Villon's life in Paris), with tavern drinking and animated discussions; and continuing with his early sense of a writer's vocation and his play of 1918, *Baal*, in which the hero murders his best friend: an episode faintly recalling Verlaine's shooting of Rimbaud. Themes of Rimbaud are also audible in his play of 1923, *In the Jungle of Cities*, an important text in its foreshadowing of the theater of the absurd, and especially in the problem it exposes of communication between human beings, a problem today closely associated with the plays of Beckett and Ionesco.

Mr. Völker stresses, and rightfully so,



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Brecht's relationship with his age and preeminently with Communism. The personal dramas are there also: his wives, children and mistresses; his theories concerning a new kind of playwriting; the very uneven literary achievements of the plays; his skill as play director; his relationships with some of the celebrated figures of the day: Erwin Piscator, Thomas Mann, Charles Laughton, Elisabeth Bergner. Brecht's many activities in the theater are fully related, and each of his plays is analyzed either briefly or at some length. The strongest impression the book gives us of Brecht is the man's full consciousness of being a part of history.

If a clear picture of the personality of Bertolt Brecht does not emerge from this biography, I would not necessarily accuse the biographer. A life spent in the theater as playwright and director, with the endless complications involved in attracting a public, in placating the actors, in satisfying the producers, is a life constantly changing its focus, its cities, its friends, its projects. Because of these inevitable changes going on, which are faithfully narrated by Mr. Völker, we have the sense of a personality changing also in the light of changing circumstances.

Of all the questions that rise up in a reader's mind, the most persistent concerns the two drives that help shape this man's personality. Is it an austere devotion to Communism revealed in the Marxist didacticism of so many of his plays, or is it in the quest for his own kind of theater which would be the seeking of his self, of his self-realization? This reader finds it impossible to answer this question from the abundant data provided by Klaus Völker.

I imagine the greatest disappointment for Brecht himself was his failure to apply his principal dramatic theory by which he hoped to create a new kind of theater In English, this is usually called the "alienation effect." Traditionally, in successfully acted plays, the members of the audience are able to identify with characters on the stage. This enhances the enjoyment of the audience and sharpens the skills of the actors. Brecht believed that this alliance between actor and audience should be severed, and he used every device possible to obstruct any identification with characters on the stage. It never worked completely. In *Mother Courage*, for example, that chronicle of a sutler who follows an army and sells food to the soldiers, there is inevitably an impulse of sympathy on the part of the audience toward the leading character.

This biography of a man is also a chronicle of the productions of his plays, with a constantly shifting background of sites: Munich, Berlin, London, Denmark, Stockholm, Finland, Hollywood, New York. But there were only a few notable theatrical successes. *The Threepenny Opera*, a work done in collaboration with Kurt Weill, lasted a year in Berlin in 1928. This opera on the violence of the underworld still appears today on university stages. The circumstances surrounding the various productions are described in this book, but Mr. Völker is not a literary critic and for an assessment of the plays one would have to go to the writings of Martin Esslin, Eric Bentley and David Grossvogel.

Only a small percentage of the many names of people in Brecht's personal life and theatrical career will be recognized by American readers, but those friends and associates who are known here form an impressive repertory: Walter Benjamin, Arnold Schoenberg, Peter Lorre, Aldous Huxley, among others.

The biography of Völker revives the moving story of a gifted man who from his earliest poem, *Legend of the Dead Soldier*, to his last play, *Turandot*, wanted to dramatize history and man's social responsibility. In its final estimate, the book does not take a view different from the two extreme views of Eugene Ionesco who sees in Brecht's art a sterile ideological theater, and of Kenneth Tynan who sees in Brecht a socially committed ideal.

The professor's radical soap opera

WORKING FOR CAPITALISM

Richard M. Pfeffer

Columbia University Press, $5.95, 382pp.

Robert Howard

THE PROBLEMS with *Working for Capitalism* begin with the Prologue. A college professor and graduate of "so-called elite universities" decided to spend his sabbatical working in a factory. In itself, this is not so unusual; academics have made forays into the workplace for years, usually calling it "participant-observation." However, this academic, we are told, has "violated" the systematic separation between mental and manual labor in our society and as a result has acquired a "new understanding" of how society functions. "America's fundamental problem is capitalism." That such an idea might be considered new is curious; even more so is the fact that, is spite of his intense awareness of all that separates him from workers and their daily lives, the author decides: ". . . Although I was essentially a stranger to the social science literature on work, I would write up my work experience before I allowed myself to read anything specifically about work in America."

Unfortunately, it shows. There is not an idea or argument in this disappointing and unoriginal book which has not been made more clearly and cogently by someone else.

Pfeffer, a political scientist at Johns Hopkins University, spent seven months in 1974 and 1975 operating a fork-lift in a Baltimore factory. Instead of a fascinating insider's view of class relations in a particular workplace, he has written a Marxist soap opera, rife with stock stereotypes and banal moralizing. There is the "young movement type," the "not particularly progressive woman," the "savvy worker," and the "scrappy rank-and-filer" (among others). They spout neat one-liners which announce the lessons Pfeffer has learned and on which he then expounds with generous use of italics and quasi-Marxist buzz words, just in case the reader didn't catch it the first time. But these cardboard characters

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are forced to carry too much weight. For all his effort to communicate the authentic reality of the workplace, Pfeffer buries it beneath the easy truths about capitalist exploitation which he finds there.

A large part of the problem is that *Working for Capitalism* is so poorly written. These pages read like the unrevised notes Pfeffer says he kept in the factory while working. Descriptions are vague and choppy; adjectives and adverbs are made to do when active verbs are necessary; there is a paucity of credible dialogue. Pfeffer's literary awkwardness rivals the worst excesses of bourgeois sociologists and cries out for an editor. He consistently uses "societal" where (the admittedly less 'scientific') "social" would do. And he describes his first day on the job, learning strange new work tasks as "frantically trying to catch up on missed years of working-class socialization."

The labored style is simply a correlate of the unoriginal thinking. Pfeffer's maddening habit is to announce well-known concepts as if they were brazen new insights. Like the tendency to italicize, he borrows most of them from Marx, but with none of the verve and intellectual audacity of his forbear. Even those aspects of working life which he observes more or less correctly—the arbitrariness of management's authority, the ambivalent role of labor unions in the workplace—are vitiated because he observes them poorly. Like the real emotions which are the subject of a soap opera, they cannot be taken seriously for Pfeffer has so trivialized them.

Working for Capitalism is especially disappointing because it panders to our need for more complex and subtle descriptions of working-class lives. So enamored of his "new understanding," Pfeffer never allows these men and women to come to life. He does not let them speak at any length about their work; he rarely even tells us their names. (Ironically, the only people who take on any personality in the book are the bosses—foremen, supervisors, their union collaborators—and a few left-wing "activists"; perphaps because these categories best fit Pfeffer's class struggle paradigm.) Most of these workers are mere shadows; they may appear briefly to serve his argument but they have no existence independent of it. Pfeffer is too busy preaching his morals about work in capitalist society to portray them as complex and contradictory human beings.

If this book has any value, it lies in what it unintentionally reveals about the American left and, in particular, a certain kind of left-wing intellectual. To be simultaneously 'on the left' and an intellectual, two roles which have never stood for much in this society, is to be threatened by a peculiar double lack of social affirmation. Pfeffer, a self-styled "middle class radical," is painfully conscious of his radical separation from most Americans and from "dominant social realities." So he strives to connect with the working class, to submerge his sense of difference in the camaraderie of the workplace.

In effect, the star of this soap opera is its author. For awhile he plays a new social role: the militant worker who defends the "interests" of his class and receives the accolades of his work-mates for it (see Pfeffer's description of his activist role during contract negotiations at the factory). But Pfeffer only succeeds in embracing his own abstractions. *Working for Capitalism* is less about American workers than it is about a controlled experiment in radical wish-fulfillment.

Pfeffer's all-purpose solution to the ills of the workplace is "a strong and militant working-class movement." But he cannot suggest how such a movement might come about because he is finally so ignorant of working class consciousness in American society. His radicalism is a kind of "left-wing nominalism"; too intent on naming what he sees 'correctly' (making the "capitalist connection" as he puts it), he never quite realizes that names are not solutions. And to the degree that they mask complicated questions of consciousness and ideology, they even become part of the problem. *Working for Capitalism* neither asks nor answers any of the really hard questions about work in capitalist society.

REVIEWERS

LOUIS DUPRE *is T. Lawrence Riggs Professor of Religious Studies at Yale.*

EUGENE FONTINELL *is a member of the philosophy department at Queens College, CUNY, in New York.*

GENE BELL-VILLADA *teaches Spanish at Williams College. He recently received a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to study the problem of "art for art's sake."*

WALLACE FOWLIE *will be teaching next year at Sewanee. His latest book is* Journal of Rehearsals: A Memoir *(Duke University).*

ROBERT HOWARD *is Staff Associate of the* New Republic.

JOSEPH CUNNEEN, *editor of* Cross Currents, *is teaching courses in religion and literature at Mercy College, Dobbs Ferry, New York.*

In brief

SAINTS ALIVE! *by Anne Fremantle, Doubleday, $7.95, 183 pp.*

The saints are "in" again, and it was a shrewd publishing idea to get Anne Fremantle to present "the lives of thirteen heroic saints," from Paul to Frances Cabrini. Although not the stylistic equal of her *Three-Cornered Hat*, *Saints Alive!* is not only a pleasure to read, but bears witness to the author's long-time study of world religions and her professional skills dealing with popular history and biography. Nevertheless, the book is a disappointment, especially if one considers the high possibilities of subject and author.

Probably the main problem derived from the restrictions of the editorial assignment: there were too many saints to cover in a small book, and too much emphasis on historical information to allow proper follow-through on the teasing line from the Introduction, "What is required of anyone who aspires to become a saint is to become what they were meant to be." The reader will be newly challenged by Mrs. Fremantle's treatment of Francis of Assisi, Thomas More, Francis de Sales, and Therese of Lisieux, but Helena was a vain attempt (no material to work with), Paul suffers from an uneasy blending of *Acts* and the historical research of Michael Grant, and poor

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Bridget of Sweden gets lost in an almost comically hurried parade of events and details.

What is more important and surprising in so practiced an author is a confusion of tone. Observations suggesting a keen sense both of psychology and the sovereignty of God's grace are undercut by a surprising emphasis on saints as wonder-workers; an economical presentation of the historical context is frequently interrupted for snatches of pious legend, as if both are to be read in the same way. It is not that the legendary material is unimportant, often arising spontaneously during the saint's lifetime or immediately afterwards, but Mrs. Fremantle seems strangely reluctant to comment on its underlying significance, as if that were to "explain away" the holy.

The result is that the subtly profound viewpoint of the author doesn't adequately come through. The general Catholic reader to whom the book is addressed could even be encouraged to a new version of pre-Vatican II triumphalism by some of the brief summaries of saintly relevance with which the chapters too neatly conclude, as well as by misdirected shots at "Women's Lib," or loaded comparisons between Christian and Eastern holy men. *Saints Alive!* should attract a wide audience and surely fulfills its purpose by drawing all but the most insensitive to reflect on the meaning of holiness. Nevertheless, I am impelled to sin against the First Commandment for book reviewers—Avoid talking about a different book than the one you've got before you—and ask the publisher to press Mrs. Fremantle to do a full-length study of any saint she chooses (my preference would be someone uncanonized). And let her write her own title this time!

JOSEPH CUNNEEN

Correspondence

Continued from page 351)

productiveness in this area (e.g.,bussing). The problem, of course, is moral in nature and this depends, in the last analysis, not on court decisions, but upon the moral sense of a people. This helps to form and is formed by, legislation in the political process. To bypass this process via the judiciary will only compound the problem.

PETER J. RIGA

Weber & the future

New York, N.Y.

To the Editors: Professor Isidore Silver's article "Death Sentence for Affirmative Action?," [Mar. 30] may have a question mark in its title, but is certainly written as if it ended with an exclamation point. It presumes an omniscience on the part of the author which the theologians may attribute to God, but which mortals should be exceedingly wary of claiming for themselves.

The arguments in the *Kaiser Aluminum v. Weber* case have not yet been heard by the Supreme Court but Professor Silver has already announced the verdict. We are informed in advance how Justice Stephens will vote notwithstanding the fact that he has voluntarily disqualified himself from sitting with the Court on this case due to previous connections with Kaiser Aluminum. We are told how Justice Powell will reason the as yet unpresented arguments, even though illness will probably prohabit his participation in this matter.

Beyond the presumptuousness of the dogmatic assertions of foreknowledge of the conclusions of this particularly unpredictable Court, however, there are two additional elements in this article which cause me concern.

The first is the assumption that a decision upholding Weber will mean the death of affirmative action. I fervently hope that the Court will reverse the decision of the trial court and the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, and rule in favor of Kaiser in this case. A clear and unequivocal ruling in behalf of Kaiser's efforts to rectify its past history of discrimination would be most welcome. Nonetheless, a decision in behalf of Weber does not mean that those of us whc are committed to equality in employment should throw in the towel and admit defeat. It would mean that we had lost one suit in the Supreme Court and would have to go back to the drawing board and devise some new approaches and new strategies toward the ac-

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complishment of our goals. I grow weary of the naysayers and prophets of doom who seem to feel that administrative remedies devised yesterday provide the only hope. Surely we can be more flexible and creative than that.

Secondly, Silver writes in conclusion: "Sadly enough, the Supreme Court's attitudes reflect the dominant, short-sighted and ultimately self-defeating mood of the country." In so declaring, the writer not only claims to know the mind of the Court, but also of the American public. I have reason to believe that he is wrong about public opinion.

Within the past ninety days Louis Harris and Associates have completed a comprehensive survey of attitudes toward racial and religious minorities in America at the request of the National Conference of Christians and Jews. One of the most startling findings of that national poll is that the American people, contrary to the opinion of people like Isidore Silver, are not opposed to Affirmative Action programs.

The *Bakke* decision, by some strange twist, turns out to have been a critical threshold in changing white attitudes toward affirmative action programs for blacks in both jobs and higher education areas. Once the concept of "rigid quotas" is ruled out, white conscience about discrimination and lack of opportunity for blacks begins to surface again. By 70-21 percent a majority of white Americans feel "that it makes sense to give special training and advice to women and minorities so that they may perform better on the job." By a nearly identical 71-21 percent margin, whites also agree now that "after years of discrimination, it is only fair to set up special programs to make sure that women and minorities are given every chance to have equal opportunities in employment and education." The bottom line is: by 67-17 percent, a majority of whites favor such programs for blacks in industry, and a comparable 68-15 percent majority favor affirmative action for blacks in higher education.

Rather than this being a time for gloom and doom and preparing the burial rights for affirmative action, we have never had a greater opportunity to make significant strides forward in this vital arena. My fear is that articles like the one you published will cause us to lose heart and fail to take advantage of the chance we have to pay off the I.O.U.s which white America owes its minority brothers and sisters.

DONALD W. McEVOY
National Program Director
National Conference
of Christians and Jews

The author replies:

Since Mr. Scannell's letter addresses quite different questions from those addressed in my piece, I do not feel that I can add anything enlightening to what he said. Professor Riga's expansion of the narrow points I made raises, of course, the critical and omnipresent issue of constitutional and moral relationships between the Court and Congress. He oversimplifies: throughout our history the Court has involved itself in the most controversial moral and political issues and Justice Powell's *Bakke* opinion, as I noted, sought to shape the future by enunciating certain 14th Amendment principles that Congress and public opinion should recognize. Of course, the Marshall group also sought to influence public opinion by its passionate enunciation of what it perceived to be the "true" meaning of the Amendment. While it is true that congressional action may occur, the result may well mirror one of those two competing moral perceptions—and I simply fear that the Powell position will be more persuasive.

I am disquieted by the vitriol of Mr. McEvoy's letter. I was simply doing what most political scientists and Constitutional Law scholars do—attempting to predict Court decisions on the basis of extant evidence. When the piece was being prepared, I did not know of, nor could I have foreseen, that two of the conservative Justices would not (or, in Powell's case, might not) participate. I was not a "naysayer" and "prophet of doom," but rather suggested that administrative agency interpretations of Title VII might well achieve the goals of equal opportunity, even were *Weber* to be decided along *Bakke* lines. Incidentally, my "forecast" may well apply not to *Weber* (which may be re-argued next Term of the Court or may—if Powell participates—result in a 4-4 tie without opinion) but to the next affirmative action case when Stevens does sit. While the Harris Poll cited by Mr. McEvoy is promising, I still worry about (a) public ambivalence (poll results often depend upon the framing and language of the questions) (b) the translatability of general attitudes into specific ones (would public endorsement of pious general sentiments extend to the *Weber* agreement itself?) (c) the illegality of at least some of the programs favored by the public under Title VII as interpreted by the Court and Congress's disinclination to tamper with the language of Title VII and (d) the relegation of any positive public attitudes toward affirmative action to the "back burner" of public concern (intensity of feelings is not measured by the poll). Hanging the messenger, Mr. McEvoy, is no substitute for acting on the message, and I wanted the article to stimulate thinking about the problem and possible solutions. I join the writer in seeking "more flexible and creative" solutions.

ISIDORE SILVER

Humble pie

New York, N.Y.

To the Editors: Recently I proofread the masthead page of *Christianity and Crisis*, and was therefore responsible when my boss's name came out "Conwan" instead of "Cowan." This made Mr. Cowan powerless for two weeks, and it made me permanently humble about proofreading. Still: In my review of *A Private Choice* in your issue of May 14, you've made me say that Professor Noonan will not grant that "normal" perceptions may be social constructs. What I wrote was "moral" perceptions. Maybe moral is normal and normal moral, but there's a shade of difference. Please humble yourself by printing this diatribe.

ROBERT G. HOYT

Second helping

While we're at it, Robert Howard's "Going Bust in Youngstown" [May 25] mentions "over 100,000 jobs" lost since 1950 (p. 301). It should read "over 10,000."

THE EDITORS

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UNEARTHED TREASURE

by Robert L. Spaeth

I've inherited a treasure. It came to light, as many treasures do, when a closet was cleaned. The friend who cleaned the closet put the treasure into cardboard boxes, considered transferring it to a new closet, considered burying it, then decided to bequeath it to me. A rare friend.

The treasure is simple to describe but complicated to appreciate. It consists of hundreds upon hundreds of copies of *Commonweal* magazine, from the current issues of 1979 back to the yellowing issues of 1946. The collection is not complete—what closet is? Nonetheless, it is pure gold.

I have spread the treasure out on my living room floor where I can sit among some of the best American Catholic writing of the past quarter-century. . . .

At my feet, within my reach, lies an abundance of valuable writing by great Catholic authors: Anne Fremantle, Ronald Knox, Jacques Maritain, Graham Greene, John Cogley, William V. Shannon, William P. Clancy, Christopher Dawson, Walker Percy, Daniel Callahan, Hans Kung. There are also non-Catholic writers, such as Robert McAfee Brown and Harvey Cox, whose keen *Commonweal* articles made them equally valuable to Catholic thought. . . .

The permanence in my *Commonweal* collection is the determination of its editors and writers to face the issues of each day—political, cultural, religious—with careful thought and moderation. Flippancy is not a mark of *Commonweal*.

Commonweal's seriousness began with the magazine itself, in 1924, when a group of Catholic laymen founded a weekly review (changed to bi-weekly in '74) based on "the continuous, unbroken tradition and teachings of the historic Mother Church." The founders believed that "nothing can do so much for the betterment, the happiness, and the peace of the American people as the influence of the enduring and tested principles of Catholic Christianity."

With that dedication, *Commonweal* struggled with the Spanish Civil War, the rise of Communism, the Catholic Worker movement, the liturgical movement, McCarthyism, Vatican Council II, Vietnam, *Humanae Vitae*, Watergate. The magazine has paid constant attention to Catholic education, ecumenism, civil rights, reform of the church, the Catholic press. In recent years it has published special issues called "*Commonweal* Papers" on topics such as "Jesus," "The Holy Spirit," "Faith" "New Frontiers in Theology."

My own small treasure, numbering fewer than half of the issues published over 55 years, shows that *Commonweal* grappled with tough problems early and often. Two articles called "Should Women be Priests?" appeared in 1966. Possible changes in abortion laws were analyzed repeatedly in the '60's.

So I look for *Commonweal's* reaction to the 1973 Supreme Court decision on abortion. What a surprise to find the major article written by Congressman Robert F. Drinan SJ. Father Drinan believed the Court's decision was caused by the justices' recognition that abortion laws are "unenforced and unenforceable." He saw then that the decision gave "virtually exclusive jurisdiction over who will live and who will die during the first three months of their unborn existence" to the "physicians of America." Drinan—now, oddly enough, on the "hit list" of the political pro-lifers—recommended that "those who believe that the inviolability of all human life, fetal or not, is the centerpiece of our civilization must not now be silent about their convictions."

When *Commonweal* turned 50, its editors expressed gratitude to their writers, contributors, advertisers, and subscribers. The gratitude should flow the other way also; surrounded by 23 years of *Commonweal*, my gratitude is immense.

(Robert L. Spaeth has recently been appointed Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, Saint John's University in Collegeville, Minnesota. This material is excerpted from a column in the St. Cloud Visitor *of April 12 and is reprinted with permission.)*

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